



TRINITY CHURCH.

A HUNDRED YEARS OF RICHMOND METHODISM

THE STORY AS TOLD AT THE
CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF

1899

EDITED BY
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EDITOR'S NOTE.

In the selection of material for this volume the aim has been, first, to preserve all of the historical and biographical information presented at, or brought to light by the Centennial celebration; and second, to publish such other Centennial matter of related character as the remaining space would allow.

While it is to be regretted that many good things spoken at the Centennial have not found a place in these pages, it will be readily perceived that the publication of all the addresses would have destroyed the unity of the volume and neutralized its historical flavor.

The main object has been not to tell the story of the Centennial celebration, but rather to record the deeds, principles and methods which made such a celebration possible.

INTRODUCTORY

The idea of celebrating the one hundredth anniversary of the establishment of Methodism in Richmond originated with the Rev. Joseph T. Mastin, pastor of Trinity Church. It was fitting that Trinity, "the old mother church," should take the initiative in such a movement, and to this end Mr. Mastin, early in the autumn of 1898, brought the matter to the attention of his Official Board, and it was referred to a committee for consideration. At the next meeting of the Board the committee recommended that the Methodist Preachers' Meeting of Richmond and Manchester "be requested to adopt some plan to properly celebrate the Centennial of Methodism in Richmond;" whereupon Mr. Charles W. Hardwicke offered as a substitute a resolution committing Trinity Church to the inauguration of the movement, and inviting the coöperation of all the Methodists of the city.

The substitute was adopted, and on the evening of January 26, 1899, at the invitation of the Board, nearly two hundred representative Methodists of Richmond met at Trinity Church. After a delightful social hour, during which supper was served by the

ladies of the Church, the meeting was called to order by the pastor, and the Rev. R. T. Wilson, presiding elder of the Richmond District, was requested to take the chair. A brief discussion revealed the fact that the entire Methodist community was in hearty sympathy with the movement, and on motion of Col. John P Branch it was unanimously resolved "to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the Methodist Church in this city." A committee composed of C. W Hardwicke (chairman), Rev. J. T. Mastin, R. H. Hardesty, W H. Allison, George L. Bidgood, John P Branch, J. Thompson Brown, H. Seldon Taylor, J. S. Brauer, F. W Graves, H. C. Osterbind, C. E. Brauer, A. Maupin, E. M. Redford and W F. Hudson was appointed to take the matter in hand, and to report at a meeting of the pastors and official members to be held at Centenary Church in March.

This committee met shortly afterwards at the residence of Col. John P Branch, and appointed the following committee on programme: C. W Hardwicke, Rev. J. T. Mastin, Col. John P Branch, Dr. W V Tudor, Captain W H. Allison, Dr. W G. Starr, H. Seldon Taylor and Dr. J. Powell Garland. At this meeting it was resolved to invite the churches of Manchester, Barton Heights and Highland Park to unite with the Richmond churches in the celebration.

The gathering of the pastors and official members at Centenary on the evening of the ninth of March

was a notable event. Here, as at Trinity, the social feature was made prominent, and the evening was marked by many happy manifestations of fraternal feeling. The meeting at Trinity had awakened a deep interest in the welfare of Methodism as related to the community at large, and a sentiment had been developed in favor of making the Centennial the beginning of a great church-extension movement. This sentiment found expression at Centenary in the following resolution, which was adopted:

Resolved, That we, the Methodists of Richmond and Manchester, form an organization to be known as the Church Extension Society of Richmond and Vicinity, retaining the present officers and committees until the first Thursday in November, and that officers be elected semi-annually thereafter—that is to say, on the first day of November and the first day of May of each year.

At this meeting the Centennial Committee was enlarged by the addition of Messrs. J. H. Busby, A. D. Shotwell, W. K. Bache, A. H. Thomas and R. F. Yarborough, representing the churches of Manchester, Barton Heights and Highland Park.

The enthusiastic coöperation of all the churches having been obtained the success of the celebration was assured, and the preparations were now pushed rapidly to completion. Never were plans more wisely laid or more faithfully executed. The churches were fortunate in having such a leader as Mr. Mastin, whose enthusiasm kindled everyone with whom he came in contact; and Mr. Mastin was fortunate in

having at his back a committee representative of the best executive ability of the churches.

The Methodist Preachers' Meeting of Richmond and Manchester adopted by a rising vote a resolution of thanks to Mr. Mastin "for his untiring efforts to make the Centennial a notable event in the history of Methodism in this city."

Among those who rendered distinguished service in the movement the name of the chairman of the committee, Mr. Charles W. Hardwicke, is worthy of special mention.

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THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION.

APRIL 23-27, 1899.

THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION.

The Centennial was celebrated under the law of liberty. It was meet that the spirit of the fathers should have the right of way, and it was assumed that the spirit of the fathers would not choose a way through the intricacies of imposing ceremony. And so, instead of a function there was an experience-meeting; and instead of a parade there was a love-feast. From beginning to end it was an affair of the heart.

It began early in the morning of the twenty-third of April—a Sunday of rare beauty. The congregation that thronged the lecture room of Trinity Church at the opening service came already imbued with the spirit of the hour. The tide of feeling rose with the gathering of the people, and before the meeting began it had run over in many a thrilling burst of song.

The Rev. J. T. Mastin, pastor of Trinity, spoke fit words of welcome, and in presenting the Rev. Dr. Alexander G. Brown as leader of the meeting, said: “Dr. Brown was the first pastor of this church, and the last pastor of the old church on Franklin street. Probably the first service in this building was held

in this room. It is fitting therefore that the initial Centennial service should be held here, and that it should be conducted by Dr. Brown."

It was an experience-meeting of the old type. Dr. Brown read a Scripture lesson, and the congregation sang, "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing." Then Mr. J. W. Fergusson, an honored member of Trinity, and the oldest official member of the Methodist Church in Richmond, led in prayer, and the meeting was open for testimonies. It was a memorable hour. The atmosphere fairly quivered with the spirit of the past, and there were times when the walls that separated the visible from the invisible seemed a mere tissue, too thin to keep out the sound of voices from beyond.

The main audience room was packed to the doors when Bishop Wilson began the eleven o'clock service. The opening hymn, "Amazing Grace How Sweet The Sound," sung as the old fathers loved to sing it, struck the key-note of the hour. In this service, as indeed in all the exercises of the week, the entire audience came under the spell of the wonderful old tunes that had been resurrected for the occasion. The burden of the Bishop's sermon was that only those things which are pure and good shall survive and triumph. The text was Matthew 5:17: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfill." Dr. Paul Whitehead and Dr. J. J. Lafferty assisted in the devotional exercises.

Services appropriate to the day were held in nearly all the churches. In the morning the Rev E. E. Hoss, LL. D., editor of the "Nashville Christian Advocate," preached at Park Place, Dr. William G. Starr, at Laurel Street, and the Rev. R. Finley Gayle at Broad Street. At night Bishop Wilson preached at Centenary, Dr. Hoss at Broad Street and Dr. W V Tudor at Union Station. Several pastors who occupied their own pulpits preached Centennial sermons. At all the churches there were great congregations and many people were turned away for lack of room. A pleasurable incident of the day was the playing of old tunes on the Centenary chime.

The Sunday School reunion at Trinity Church in the afternoon was attended by representatives of every denomination and every sphere of life. Among the persons of distinction in the audience were the Governor of the State and the Mayor of the City. The exercises, which were conducted by the pastor, included addresses by the Hon. Addison Maupin, president of the Methodist Sunday School Society of Richmond, and the Rev. J. C. Reed (a former pastor of the church), and impromptu speeches by Governor Tyler, Dr. W V Tudor, Dr. J. Powell Garland (who was at one time pastor of Trinity), the Rev. James Cannon, Jr., and Mr. George L. Bidgood. Mr. Maupin spoke on "The School of the Present," Mr. Reed on "The School of the Future." Governor Tyler gave some delightful reminiscences of his work as a superintendent of a Methodist Sunday School.

In a brief sketch of the history of Trinity Sunday School, Mr. Mastin said that it is the oldest Sunday School in continuous operation in the State, having maintained its organization without a break since 1814. The school at first met in the gallery of the church on Nineteenth and Franklin streets, but the class-meeting being held at the same hour in the body of the church, the work was so seriously embarrassed by the songs and shouts of the brethren that a change of quarters became necessary, and it was moved to the school-house of Miss Mary Bowles, a Methodist lady of remarkable gifts and wide influence.

Mr. Mastin's reference to Miss Bowles led to a happy incident. The Rev. James Cannon, Jr., arose and said:

"I have just learned of an instance which I think will be of interest at this time. Since your remarks about Miss Bowles this card which I hold in my hand has been handed to me. It reads as follows

"On one side—

"They found the Child in the Temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions."—

St. Luke, 2nd Chapter, 46th verse.

M. B.

Richmond, Va., Dec. 25th, 1828.

"On the other side—

Master Wallace is entitled to one dollar for punctual attendance, good behavior, and the uncommon progress he has made in learning.

M. B.

To Mr. and Mrs. Bennett.



THE REV. JOSEPH T. MASTIN.
Pastor Trinity Church.

“ This card was given to the late Dr. W W Bennett when he was seven years old, was kept by him in his pocket-book to the day of his death, when it was removed and has been carefully preserved since. Who can tell what influence it had upon his long and active life ! ”

After Sunday the meetings were held during the day at Broad Street Church, and in the evening (with one exception), at Centenary; and were presided over alternately by Dr. J. Powell Garland, presiding elder of the West Richmond District, and the Rev R. T. Wilson, presiding elder of the Richmond District. The exercises on Monday began at eleven o'clock with a service of song conducted by Dr. Tudor. The singing was led by a chorus of a hundred voices, which had been trained for the celebration under the direction of Dr. Tudor by Mr. J. L. Mitchell, choir-master, and Mr. Shepherd Webb, organist. At the conclusion of this service Dr. E. E. Hoss delivered an address on “ The Sources of Power in Methodism.”

In the afternoon there were addresses by Col. A. S. Buford of Broad Street Church, and Col. John P Branch of Centenary, on “ Our Church in its Relations to Business Life; ” and a paper by Dr. Alexander G. Brown on “ Methodism in Richmond for One Hundred Years,” which on account of the author's indisposition was read by Prof. R. E. Blackwell of Randolph-Macon College.

In the evening at Centenary Bishop Wilson delivered an address on Foreign Missions.

Tuesday had been set apart as missionary day, but there were necessary changes in the programme which gave to the exercises a varied character. At the morning meeting Dr. J. J. Lafferty portrayed the trials and triumphs of the men who made Methodism, and Bishop Wilson spoke on Foreign Missions, with special reference to the work of the Woman's Board. In the afternoon, Dr. Henry E. Johnson, made an address on "The Social and Revival Meetings of Methodism," which prepared the way for an experience meeting, during which the entire audience was swept by a surge of emotion, and the thrilling scenes of Sunday morning were repeated.

In the evening at Centenary Dr. W. J. Young, pastor of Epworth Church, Norfolk, spoke on "Methodism and City Evangelization." The Rev. W. B. Beauchamp, who was on the programme for an address on "The Open Door for City Mission Work in Richmond," was too unwell to fill his engagement, but his address appears in this volume.

Wednesday morning Dr. William V. Tudor spoke on "The Connectional Idea and the Local Church," and the Rev. R. Finley Gayle on "What the Church is to Me." The afternoon meeting was devoted to the memory of the heroes who helped make Methodism what it is in Richmond. The Rev. James C. Reed recalled the lives of George Fergusson, Samuel Putney and William Willis—names identified

with the earliest history of Richmond Methodism. Dr. W. G. Starr read brief sketches of William Allison and James M. Taylor, leading spirits who rendered eminent service to the Church "in the midst of the century," and the Rev. W. W. Lear read a historical paper relating to the same period, entitled "Centenary and her Colonies." Dr. Paul Whitehead read a character sketch of David S. Doggett and also of Thomas Branch, representative Methodists of the generation that has just passed away.

At night Dr. William G. Starr spoke at Centenary Church on "The Influence of Methodism in the History of the American Republic."

Thursday was Sunday-School day. At the morning meeting the Hon. Addison Maupin gave a brief sketch of the Sunday School work of Richmond and adjacent districts; and the Hon. John Lamb, member of Congress, delivered an address on the influence and possibilities of the Sunday School. A feature of the day was the presence of the Sunday School Editor of the Church, Dr. James Atkins, who spoke in the morning on "The Sunday School as an Educator," and in the afternoon on "The Old-time School and the New." Other speakers in the afternoon were Mr. Gilbert J. Hunt of Richmond, who gave some reminiscences of his work as a Superintendent, and the Rev. C. L. Bane, who prepared the way for a Sunday School experience-meeting.

The celebration reached its culmination in the closing exercises, which were held Thursday night in

Broad Street Church. Although it was known that the evening would be devoted wholly to an old-time love-feast, the people came in such numbers that it became necessary to hold an overflow meeting in the basement. The exercises in the main auditorium were conducted by Dr. Tudor, while the overflow meeting was in charge of Dr. H. E. Johnson. A pleasing incident at the beginning of the love-feast was the spontaneous adoption of a suggestion made by Dr. Garland that the audience, by a rising vote, tender its thanks to the Rev. J. T. Mastin, to whose efforts the success of the Centennial was mainly due. Almost the entire congregation partook of the elements of the feast, and probably more than half a hundred persons testified to their love for Christ. The secular press, in reporting the meeting, thought it worth while to note that among those who spoke were representatives of the highest walks of life. Many of the testimonies were deeply affecting, and together with the singing of the old-time hymns kept the audience in a tremor of emotion. The presence of the Holy Spirit was shown by many infallible proofs. Souls were converted and wanderers were reclaimed. The last moments were full of tenderness. "The Old Ship of Zion" was sung as it has probably never been sung since the heroic age of Methodism, and the meeting came to its close amid showers of tears and of blessing.

Thus ended one of the greatest religious festivals Methodism has ever known. The exercises furnished

little material for narrative, being singularly devoid of parade and sensational incident, but the addresses furnished much rich material for record, as a glance at the following pages will show. The best part of the feast—the revival of sacred memories, the profound stirring of the emotions, and the gracious manifestations of the Holy Spirit—will have permanent record, it is confidently believed, in the future of Richmond Methodism and in the lives of a multitude of Richmond Methodists.

THE MAKING OF METHODISM IN
RICHMOND.

I.

METHODISM IN RICHMOND FOR ONE HUNDRED YEARS.

BY ALEXANDER G. BROWN, D. D.

It will be readily perceived that the subject assigned to me is too broad to be treated with anything like thoroughness in the time allotted to this address. I will not be expected therefore to present a connected history except in outline, tracing as I may be able the numerical and material growth of Richmond Methodism from the year 1799, when our first house of worship was built and when the membership was only twenty-eight, to this centennial year, when we have fifteen churches and a membership of 6,458.

Accepting as our starting point the first Methodist church built in the city of Richmond in the year 1799, I will ask you to go with me to the site of that sacred edifice, on the northeast corner of Nineteenth and Franklin streets.

The house was built of brick, fronting thirty-five feet on Franklin street, and running back forty feet in a line with Nineteenth street; and although when compared with the church architecture of to-day it

may be said to have been an inexpensive and unattractive edifice, yet as a matter of fact, it surpassed in cost, quality and seating capacity the old colonial church of St. John's parish.

This, our first church, was formally set apart to the worship of Almighty God early in the year 1800, when there were only twenty-eight white Methodists in the city, and these for the most part not of the native population but immigrants from England and elsewhere. The first pastor in charge was Thomas Lyell, who was transferred by Bishop Asbury from the Baltimore to the Virginia Conference in May, 1799. He was a comparatively young man, a good speaker and full of zeal in the ministry. His talents were of the popular type, and he soon became a great favorite and won the admiration and confidence of the community.

Thanks to the old Baltimore Conference, and to the venerable and revered Bishop Asbury for the gift of this man of God who first planted Methodism firmly in Virginia's capital city! It is refreshing to recall that in those early days our episcopacy did not hesitate when necessary to exercise the transfer power, and that the transferred brother, when he came, received a brother's welcome and worked as a brother in the name and to the glory of God.

Soon after coming to Richmond Mr. Lyell began to arrange for the building of this first house of worship, and after a laborious effort succeeded in having it completed and in possession of the congre-

gation by the close of the first and only year of his pastorate. Indeed, it appears to have been ready for use before that time. "I would have preached within the walls of our new house of worship at Richmond," writes Bishop Asbury in his journal, September 8, 1799, "but the excessive rains we had prevented."

Previous to the erection of this first church, the Methodists were permitted to worship in the old Henrico County courthouse, located on East Main street, where the present courthouse now stands. In a short while, however, this privilege was withdrawn on complaint of the people residing in the vicinity that the loud singing and shouting of the enthusiastic brethren was a serious disturbance of their peace. They were compelled therefore to betake themselves to the common, and to worship, as best they could, in the open air under the broad canopy of heaven. But the Lord, who opened the heart of Lydia, Paul's first European convert, opened the way for the Methodist Church through the heart of an elect lady whose name and noble deeds should never be forgotten by our Methodist people.

Among the strangers from abroad who had settled in Richmond was a family by the name of Parrott. Though neither rich nor influential, they seem to have possessed a comfortable home, with means sufficient to enable them to help their brethren and to dispense a generous hospitality. Mr. Parrott, though not a member of the church, was warmly attached to the Methodists and showed them great kindness and

liberality. His wife and daughters were Wesleyan Methodists of the best type, full of zeal and liberality, ever ready to do anything in their power for the cause of Christ. The family resided on the south side of Main street, near the first market, and their house was recognized as the Methodist preacher's home. Bishop Asbury refers in complimentary terms to this family in his journal. "Who could be kinder to us than Mr. Parrott and his wife?" he asks. Again after a visit to this family accompanied by Dr. Coke and Richard Whatcoat, he makes this entry: "Who could make sickly travelers more welcome than Mr. Parrott and his wife?" There was in the rear of the Parrott residence a large building, which had been used as a barn or stable. With the consent and coöperation of her husband, Mrs. Parrott caused this building to be fitted up for a place of worship for the Methodist people, and here the feeble band of Richmond Methodists assembled regularly for worship.

In this lowly retreat, many of the ablest and most eloquent of the early Methodist preachers dispensed the word of Life, God being graciously with them and revealing to them his power and glory. Among them was Asbury, the recognized apostle and founder of American Methodism; Dr. Coke, the great scholar and missionary, who gave not only a large fortune but a great personality—and his own life also—to the work of Christian missions in this and in other lands. I may also add the names of McKendree, Jesse Lee

and Bishop Whatcoat—names that have been made immortal not only in Methodist history, but in the hearts of thousands and tens of thousand whose souls have been saved through the Methodist ministry

The congregation having grown too large to be accommodated in the “stable church,” as it was called, application was made for the privilege of returning to the county courthouse. This was granted, and here the Methodists continued to worship until their church was completed.

Richmond had been for some years an appointment on a circuit, but in May, 1799, it was made a separate pastoral charge, or station, and, as already stated, the Rev. Thomas Lyell was assigned as its pastor. He held service every Sunday morning in the old county courthouse, and in the afternoon of the same day preached in the hall of the House of Delegates, to which his talents attracted large crowds.

It is well known that in 1772 Methodism was planted and took root at Norfolk, and quickly spread through the cities and counties of the southside section of the State, under the leadership and powerful ministry of Robert Williams, to whom belongs the honor of having been the founder and great apostle of Methodism in this Commonwealth. As Norfolk was in comparatively easy and regular communication with Richmond, it seems strange that twenty-eight years should have elapsed before Methodism was organized in Richmond, and before any attempt was made to provide a house of worship for

its people in our capital city. But perhaps it is not less surprising that at a time when the entire population of Richmond did not exceed 5,000, and when the inhabitants were for the most part indifferent, if not hostile, to religious enterprises, and especially to Methodism, that a few Methodists of scanty resources should have attempted to erect such a church building as that which, after a desperate struggle, they succeeded in completing at the corner of Nineteenth and Franklin streets. It is worthy of remark that, with the exception of a small mission chapel erected by the Baptists in the extreme western section of the city, near where the State penitentiary now stands, this was the first house of worship built in Richmond by the voluntary contributions of the people. It is true that St. John's Church, on Church Hill, dates from the year 1740, and is, therefore, the oldest church in the city; but it must be remembered that it is a colonial building, erected by the English government and that it belonged to the Established Church of England. For many years before the era of American independence it derived its support not from the people, but from the ecclesiastical revenues of the English government. At the time of the Revolution St. John's Church was seldom open for religious worship, for the rector preached there only three times a year, namely, at Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide; and this was done, so the historian tells us, not to supply the religious wants of the com-

munity, but to prevent a forfeiture of his right to the glebe lands and the revenues derived therefrom.

These remarks must not be understood in any invidious sense; for nothing could be further from my heart than to utter a word to the disparagement of that old church, dear to us all, which, with only slight architectural modifications, still stands, as in the days of the colony, in the center of the old cemetery, embosomed in a beautiful grove where some of Virginia's earliest and most illustrious citizens and patriots sleep in honored graves. It was around the altar of that ancient church that the celebrated Virginia Convention of 1788 met to ratify the federal constitution of which Jefferson, Monroe, Madison, Marshall, Randolph, Taswell, Barbour and Lee were among the most distinguished members; and here it was that, in the convention of 1775, just before the outbreak of the Revolutionary war, when Patrick Henry was urging the convention to take decisive steps against English tyranny and oppression he used the immortal words that became the battle cry of the war for our national independence, and fired the hearts of the American people from one end of the land to the other. "There is no retreat but in submission and slavery. Our chains are already forged; their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston Commons: the next gale that sweeps from the north will bring the clash of resounding arms. I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!" It may be a question with some

whether the House of God was a proper place for such a convention to have been held, but who can doubt that God was then and there in his holy temple, and that the divine Spirit inspired the tongue of Virginia's greatest orator!

Richmond was permanently established as a station in 1808, and the following year reported 112 white members. In 1812 there were 256 white members. The highest point reached in any one of the thirteen years next succeeding was 244, but in 1825, when Rev. Joseph Carson took charge, there were only 200. Thus during the seventeen years from 1808 to 1825, the net increase in the church membership was only 88. Mr. Carson served two years, at the end of which time he reported 385, a net gain of 185, nearly doubling the membership. These figures attest more eloquently than any words I could employ, the power and effectiveness at that time of the ministry of Joseph Carson, who was one of the most eminent revivalists of his day. Other denominations shared largely in the fruits of his labors in Richmond, and a religious sentiment was generated which was a great uplift and a permanent benefit to the whole community. Indeed his ministry here marks a new era of prosperity and power in Richmond Methodism.

In 1827 two churches, Trinity and Shocco Hill, appear on the minutes, with William Hammett and G. W. Carlton as preachers in charge. At this time, although the progress of Methodism had not been so great as could have been desired, our church stood



ALEXANDER G. BROWN, D. D.

fully abreast, if not in advance, of other denominations in the city.

Before proceeding to trace the further progress of the church, I wish to invite your attention to a scene in the early history of the old First Church, which rises to the highest point of sublimity. It was on the occasion of Bishop Asbury's last sermon. The time was three o'clock in the afternoon of March 24, 1816. Faint yet pursuing, the tireless and self-denying Bishop on reaching Richmond on his way to Baltimore, after resting a while in the companionship of dear friends, expressed a desire to deliver what he thought would be, and what in fact proved to be, his last sermon to our people. His brethren, fearing that he might die in the effort, endeavored to dissuade him, but he insisted, saying, "I must, once more, deliver the gospel message in Richmond." He was taken to the door of the church in a carriage, and thence borne in a chair to the pulpit and the chair placed on a table. For nearly an hour he preached with much fervour and affection from the words, "For He will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness, because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth." (Romans 9: 28.) He spoke with great difficulty, being compelled to pause at brief intervals to recover breath, and his hearers were deeply and profoundly affected. It could hardly have been otherwise. To behold a venerable old man, bent and wasting away under the labors of many years, whose silver locks and pallid countenance and

trembling limbs presaged that his earthly race was nearly finished—yet to see in the midst of these melancholy signals of decaying nature a great soul brightly beaming with immortality, and a heart kindled with fire from heaven's altar—to behold such a man, and hear from his lips such an address on the concerns of time and eternity—what heart could be so insensible as to withstand the impressions which this scene was calculated to produce?

Exhausted almost to fainting by the effort, he was borne to his carriage and taken to his lodgings. On Monday he rested. Tuesday he set out, hoping to be able to reach Baltimore by easy stages, but he did not get farther than Spottsylvania County, where, at the house of his old friend, George Arnold, on Sunday, March 31, 1816, he breathed his last. Thus fell this great man (who in other fields might have been a Richelieu or a Cæsar), leading an army of over two hundred thousand Methodists, which, when he was ordained bishop, did not number fifteen thousand.

In the year 1812, Shocco Methodist Church, on the south side of Marshall street, between Fourth and Fifth streets, was completed, and dedicated to the worship of God by the Rev. Thomas Logan Douglas. Its first pastor was G. W. Carlton, a man of splendid abilities. The completion of the building was delayed by serious financial embarrassments. When Bishop Asbury came through Richmond in 1811, the friends of the movement were about to

abandon it. The house was then under roof, but, for lack of means, work upon it had been suspended for some time. He reached the city on Saturday, February 24, and on Sunday morning called together a number of the leading church-members, who repaired to the unfinished building, and upon a few loose boards laid down for the occasion, held a prayer-meeting. He urged the people to go forward with the work they had in hand. They nobly responded. The necessary amount of money was raised, and the work was soon finished. This building was used by the congregation until 1841, when it was sold to Mr. Wm. Evans for \$2,200. Shocco Church is still standing, though abandoned as a church, and has been converted into residences.

In 1827, the congregation worshipping at the old First Church, began a commodious church edifice on the south side of Franklin street, next to the site now occupied by the Exchange Hotel, between Fourteenth and Fifteenth streets. The location was then considered a good one, being in the midst of a desirable community and convenient to the congregation. The work on this house was completed in the year 1828. Its first pastor was Wm. Hammett, a man of Irish ancestry, and one of the most eloquent and powerful ministers of his day, but who, in after years, yielding to the promptings of an unholy ambition, renounced the ministry of the gospel, and entered political life. From his adopted State, Mississippi, he was elected to Congress, but he seems to have been comparatively

unnoticed in that body. He was succeeded in his pastorate of this church by Simon Sykes, Wm. A. Smith, G. W. Nolley, Abram Penn, Joseph Carson, David S. Doggett and Leroy M. Lee—all men of great ability, fidelity and success in the ministry.

Dr. Lee's appointment was made at the session of the Conference at Lynchburg, Va., February 11, 1835. His work, hopefully begun Sunday, March 2, 1835, soon came to an untimely end. On the night of the 20th of June the church building caught fire and was entirely destroyed. For several months thereafter Dr. Lee remained with his unfortunate flock, serving them as best he could, preaching as he found opportunity and striving to rebuild the house. His success was highly gratifying, but in the following November when the work of rebuilding was well under way, failing health required him to desist from his labors.

He left the city intending to spend the winter in Florida, but he returned the following January, arriving at Norfolk during the session of the Conference in that city. He was surprised to find that the "Christian Sentinel," a Methodist paper which had been published in Richmond since 1832, had been purchased by the Conference, and that he was to be its editor. As neither the Bishop nor the Conference had authority to make that appointment, his name appears in the minutes of that year as colleague of the Rev Wm. A. Smith, D. D., his successor at Trinity.

In connection with the rebuilding of Trinity there was an exhibition on the part of the Christian people of Richmond, especially the Presbyterian brethren, of a spirit of Christian fraternity and liberality which I must not omit to mention. The late Dr. Plummer, who at that time was pastor of the Presbyterian Church on Franklin street, located on the site now occupied by the Randolph Paper Box Factory, tendered the use of his church to the Trinity people, and appealed eloquently and successfully to his congregation to aid them by liberal contributions in their effort to rebuild their house of worship. The new building was dedicated August 28, 1836, by the pastor, Dr. Smith, whose great powers were then at their best. His powerful and eloquent preaching drew large congregations and greatly edified, comforted and encouraged his people. The church under his ministry grew and was multiplied in all the elements of material and spiritual strength.

The Centenary of the rise of Methodism in England occurred in 1839, and was celebrated throughout the United States with suitable religious exercises, and collections were taken for the benefit of various church enterprises. In Richmond appropriate services were held in Trinity and Shocco churches, and subscriptions were taken amounting to more than \$11,000. A part of this was given to the cause of missions and to the Superannuated Preachers' Fund of the Virginia Conference, and the remainder was applied to the erection of a new church on Shocco

Hill. This new church was Centenary. To this enterprise the Shocco congregation contributed \$2,200, the proceeds of the sale of their building, to which reference has already been made. Centenary—the successor to Shocco—was dedicated on the first Sunday in June, 1843, by the Rev. Edward Wadsworth, then stationed in Petersburg.

It is a pleasure to note that Centenary is now one of the handsomest, as well as one of the most commodious and prosperous churches in Southern Methodism, having been several times enlarged and beautified. It has a chime of nine bells, presented in 1883 by the family of the late Charles Talbott, who was a useful member and officer in our church, first at Trinity and then at Centenary. It has also a magnificent organ and is, in all other respects, fully equipped for the comfort of that large, intelligent and progressive congregation. From Centenary, directly, and indirectly, have sprung four other churches; namely, Laurel Street, taking place of Oregon Hill; Clay Street, taking the place of Clay Street Chapel; Park Place, taking the place of Sidney in the west end; and Highland Park in the northern suburbs of the city.

In November, 1857, the late Rev. James A. Duncan, D. D., was assigned to Trinity. The changes in that part of the city since the rebuilding of the church, and the general environment, made the location most unfortunate, in consequence of which the church for several years had seriously de-

clined. This mother church of Richmond Methodism deeply realized the fact that the tide of population was rapidly flowing to more attractive sections of the city, and that a change of location was necessary to her future usefulness. Indeed, a crisis had been reached in its history and existing conditions seemed to preclude the possibility of success, even with such a pastor in charge as the gifted, honored and beloved Dr. Duncan. But rising above all discouragements, the young pastor soon had this old and unsightly building crowded with eager and delighted congregations. His thrilling appeals filled the city with his fame, and before the close of the first year of his pastorate it was proposed that old Trinity should be divided, and that two new churches, larger and more attractive, should be built on Broad street, the main boulevard of the city. Dr. Duncan was the leader and the life of this great movement, and our beautiful Broad Street Church, standing on the corner of Tenth and Broad streets in the immediate vicinity of the State Capitol, the Governor's Mansion and the City Hall, was built the following year. This splendid and spacious structure is a monument to the genius of James A. Duncan, its founder and first pastor, and to the liberality of his devoted and lifelong friends, W K. Watts, Samuel Putney, W W Parker, James and William Allison, Stephen Putney and others.

The pulpit of this beautiful house of God, to which he was twice assigned, first in 1857 and again in 1863,

was the chief throne of Dr. Duncan's wonderful power as a preacher of the gospel during the eventful years of his pastorate. Thousands flocked to hear him. His influence widened and deepened to the close of his pastoral term, and no man in our day accomplished more than he did for Methodism and for the cause of Christ.

The fact that at this time Richmond was the capital of the Confederate States and the headquarters of the Confederate army, gave it great prominence, made it the favorite city of our South-land, and filled it with the flower of Southern society, talent and wealth. In these eventful years Dr. Duncan's preaching reached the highest pitch of his transcendent power and was heard by multitudes that no man can number. Jefferson Davis, the honored President of the Confederacy, though an Episcopalian, was a frequent visitor at his church, as was also Gen. R. E. Lee, and other notable men of the time, both in civic and military life. And when the gallant leader of the Lost Cause saw that he could no longer defend Richmond against the overwhelming hosts of the advancing foe, Dr. Duncan was invited to a seat in the car which took Mr. Davis, his family and official staff from the city.

After the surrender of the Southern army, Dr. Duncan quickly returned to his pulpit and to his people; and amid the ashes and ruins of the fallen capital his church was again filled with overflowing congregations. His eloquent tongue comforted,

edified and deeply impressed those who waited upon his faithful, spiritual and eloquent ministry. From the autumn of 1860 to 1866 he was editor-in-chief of the "Richmond Christian Advocate." When Richmond fell his paper was temporarily suspended, and a new paper, the "Episcopal Methodist," took possession of the field; but on returning to the city he immediately resumed its publication. The readiness and versatility of his talents were admirably displayed in his editorial office, and he developed a wonderful genius for work of every kind. For, while taxed and burdened with ministerial and pastoral duties, he wrote not only the editorials, but much of the most popular and enjoyable correspondence that enriched the columns of the "Advocate" during these years. A marble tablet in Broad Street Church perpetuates his immortal name, and his sacred dust sleeps in Hollywood Cemetery, his resting place being marked by a massive shaft of Virginia granite, erected by his many friends and admirers.

Dr. Duncan was succeeded at Trinity by the Rev. J. D. Blackwell, D. D., who remained but one year, and was followed by Alexander G. Brown, D. D., in November, 1859. Soon thereafter the old church building on Franklin street was sold, and the building of "New Trinity" on the corner of Twentieth and Broad streets was rapidly pushed by the zeal and liberality of such noble men as Cornelius Crew, Chas. Talbott, Wm. Willis, Sr., and his brother Joseph, Thomas Pemberton, J. W. Fergusson and others.

The spacious and beautiful lecture room, superior to any in the city at that time, was dedicated February 3, 1860, by Dr. David S. Doggett, presiding elder. Dr. Wm. A. Smith, President of Randolph Macon College, preached at night, and the pastor, Dr. A. G. Brown, in the afternoon of the same day. The main auditorium was not completed until November, 1866, when the dedicatory sermon was preached by Dr. R. N. Sledd, Dr. John E. Edwards, the pastor, preaching at night. This building was erected at a cost of \$35,000, and is in many respects a gem of architectural beauty and comfort. Thus it appears that the congregation which found themselves unable to maintain their position at Old Trinity with credit and success, after dividing, demonstrated their perfect ability to build, maintain and push forward with great success two of the largest, most costly and attractive church edifices in the city. This they did in the troublous times of the unhappy war between the States. From this fact we may derive lessons of great practical value, on which I have not time now to dwell.

There is an incident, however, connected with the removal of the congregation from "Old Trinity" to "New Trinity," which must not be omitted. The last service held in the old building on Franklin street was a love-feast, to which all the Methodists in the city were invited, in order that before turning over the property to the purchasers, the brethren, many of whom had been converted at the altar now to be

abandoned, might attest their love one for another, and by unity of spirit in the bond of peace give a practical demonstration of the blessedness, the power and the divine origin of our holy religion. The pastor, Dr. Brown, was present and presided on this interesting occasion. The house was filled to its utmost capacity. The brethren told with great tenderness and unction what the Lord had done for their souls. The hearts of the congregation were thrilled by their testimonies. There was scarcely an eye in the house that was not suffused with tears. Truly, it was good to be there. God was with us and made the occasion memorable by his presence. In this congregation there appeared a stranger who sat unobserved near the door. Before the meeting was closed the late Wm. Willis, Sr., than whom Richmond Methodism has not produced a purer, nobler type of Christian character, arose and addressed the meeting, and said that while he had greatly enjoyed the occasion there was a thought in his mind which had filled him with unutterable sadness. It was that the man of God who was the first pastor of that church, and who was largely instrumental in establishing it—the Rev. Wm. Hammett—so eminent at that time in the ministry, and so much beloved in Richmond, had since fallen away from Christ, abandoned the ministry, and entered the arena of partisan politics, and was then a very worldly and wicked man. With tears streaming from his eyes, he proposed that before departing from the church the congregation

should join in prayer to God for this fallen man. The proposition was responded to promptly and with deep feeling. The congregation bowed in prayer, led by Brother Willis. He was a man especially gifted in prayer, and no words can give an idea of the power with which he prayed on this occasion. He seemed to be talking face to face with God, and with an earnestness and felicity of expression never surpassed he pleaded for the fallen man and former pastor. A few months afterwards, it came to our knowledge, through one of the church papers, that the unobserved stranger was the Hon. Wm. Hammett. Returning to his home in Mississippi from Washington, he was stopping for the night at the Exchange Hotel, next door to Trinity Church, and observing that the house was open and service was being conducted there, he entered the auditorium and heard all that passed. The words of Wm. Willis and the prayer that followed pierced his heart. He strove to extract the arrow, but was unable to do so. He continued his journey to his home in Mississippi where under the power of his convictions he sent for a Methodist minister to whom he opened his heart, told the sad story of his fall, and expressed a desire to return to Christ and to the church. The door of the Kingdom, always open to penitent sinners, was not closed against him. He was restored to membership in the church and soon thereafter died in the faith of Him who is able to save unto the uttermost.

I have spoken of Trinity as the mother church of

Richmond Methodism, a title of honor of which she is eminently worthy; for she was the direct successor of the old "First Church" on the corner of Nineteenth and Franklin, and was instrumental, directly or indirectly, in all the movements for the extension of Methodism in Richmond. Among her most prosperous daughters is Union Station, of which I will now speak.

Early in the forties it was deemed desirable by the Methodists living in the eastern part of the city to provide a more convenient place of worship, Trinity being entirely too remote to accommodate the people of that rapidly growing section. Among those who took the initiative were Joseph R. Keiningham, Abner W. Richardson, John Nettles, Wm. McAlister, Wm. Catlin, Isaac Austin, H. A. Atkinson, and others. They began by holding prayer meetings and a Sunday School in a small building located on Venable street, between Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth streets. The undertaking proved successful, and in 1843 the Rev. Leonidas Rosser, D. D., was assigned by Episcopal appointment to the charge of this new enterprise. He quickly effected an organization with one hundred members from Trinity, nineteen from Manchester and two from Centenary, reaching a membership to start with of 121.

Of the one hundred from Trinity not one remains among us, all having been transferred to the church above. The last one, Henry Atkinson, was removed only a few days ago.

Dr. Rosser prosecuted the work with great vigor and success, and during the year provided for the erection of a more commodious house—a plain but comfortable wooden structure on the west side of Twenty-fifth street, between Nelson and Otis streets. It is still in existence, and is occupied by a colored congregation of the M. E. Church. This church appears in the minutes of 1843, under the name of Union, and from that time until 1852 first as Union and then as Asbury. The new house was dedicated by Dr. Rosser, June 16, 1844. During Dr. Rosser's first pastorate, which ended in November of that year, there was an extensive revival of religion in his charge, resulting in an addition to his church of more than one hundred members. The same year, 1844, through the enterprise and liberality of the Rev. B. R. Duvall, a house of worship, known as Wesley Chapel, was built on Seventeenth street north of Union; but though it was served by faithful ministers it maintained only a feeble existence, and in 1860 it ceased to be used as a house of worship, and was sold for residential purposes.

In 1854, during the pastorate of Rev. F. J. Boggs, the congregation on Union Hill grew too large for the house. Plans were made for a handsome brick building which was erected on the corner of Twenty-fourth and Nelson streets, and named Union Station. This enterprise was begun amid the anxious forebodings of some who feared that the members were incurring a debt beyond their ability to pay. Their

fears proved groundless, but the debt had scarcely been paid before—to quote from the historian of Union station, Mr. Hazelwood—“the City Engineer cut down the street and involved the church in another burdensome debt. This was also paid in due time. Later a lot adjoining the church was purchased and a handsome parsonage erected thereon. The filling in of the great ravine which separated Church and Union hills, and the introduction of electric railways, which have brought this church in easy communication with the most distant points of the city, and the rapid increase of population, occasioned such a demand for houses that there is left scarcely a vacant lot where in the memory of the few survivors of Old Union the eye was greeted with barren fields and unsightly gullies.” Be it said to the glory of God and to the honor of the noble people of Union Station that this church has kept pace with the material prosperity of this part of the city

It soon became evident that even this large building could not accommodate the growing congregation, and to meet the increasing demand it was resolved to build another house of worship of greater capacity and of modern architecture. On the 13th of April, 1893, the walls which had stood for thirty-nine years were leveled to the ground, and nothing was left of the old building around which clustered so many hallowed associations.

On the 11th of July, 1893, the corner-stone of the new church was laid with impressive ceremonies by

the masonic fraternity. The orator of the occasion was Rev. W V Tudor, D. D., then pastor of Broad Street Church. This church was projected and completed under the intelligent and efficient leadership of the pastor, Rev. George H. Ray, D. D., whose efforts were ably seconded and assisted by Charles H. Hasker, V Heckler, Jr., C. E. Brauer, Richard C. Bristol, C. W Enos, Frank C. Bates, and J. H. C. Walker. It is one of the handsomest church buildings in the city, being Gothic in style, with brownstone and terra-cotta trimmings, and covered with blue slate, with copper ridges and copper cornices. The interior is a marvel of architectural skill and beauty. The windows (one of which is a memorial of the first pastor, Dr. Rosser,) are stained glass and exceedingly beautiful, both in design and in execution. It has a seating capacity of fifteen hundred.

In less than a year after the laying of the cornerstone the new church was dedicated, and though a considerable debt remains, the interest thereon has always been promptly paid, and the principal is being greatly reduced year by year—a grand achievement, I must add, in view of the financial depression through which the brethren have labored. With a membership of more than a thousand men and women of zeal and liberality, it is a question of only a short time when this magnificent property will be free from financial embarrassment. Hasker Memorial (named in honor of the memory of the late Charles H. Hasker) is an offshoot from this parent



CHARLES W. HARDWICKE,
Chairman Commercial Commission.

stock, and prospers under the ministry of its promising young pastor, Rev. L. C. Shearer.

Fairmount Avenue is also an offshoot from Union, and is quite a handsome building well located on the corner of Twentieth street and the avenue whose name it bears. It was dedicated to the worship of God, January 29, 1895, by Bishop A. W. Wilson. This enterprise, begun under the ministry of Rev. L. J. Phaup, was brought to completion under the ministry of Rev. H. E. Johnson, D. D., and is now prospering under its talented young pastor, Rev. George E. Booker, Jr. A neat and comfortable parsonage has also been built. They have a flourishing Sunday School, a prosperous Epworth League, and are well equipped in every department of church enterprise. This church meets the religious wants of Methodism in a growing and rapidly improving section of our city.

To the Layman's Union, which was organized some years ago (but which I regret to say has been recently abandoned), Richmond Methodism is indebted for a work that deserves high commendation, and merits honorable record in this historical narrative. It was chiefly through the instrumentality of this organization that our handsome brick church (St. James) on the corner of Twenty-ninth and Marshall streets was built in 1891.

This church was largely an offshoot from Trinity, and its membership is composed chiefly of our younger brethren who, under the burden of an em-

barrassing debt have labored faithfully not only to meet the financial obligations of the church, but to win souls to Christ and to advance the work to which they are committed. They have shown great zeal and liberality and have met with gratifying success. Their pastor, the Rev. William B. Beauchamp, is in high favor with his people, and with the community, and is by every token a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth to a growing and most interesting congregation. The time is not far distant when this will be one of the most useful churches in Richmond Methodism.

The Layman's Union also established a church on the corner of Washington and Cary streets, which was afterwards removed to a more eligible locality, and is now known by the name of Asbury. This church has before it one of the widest and most attractive fields of work in the West End. The pastor, Rev. B. M. Beckham, whose hands are upheld by an appreciative band of brethren, is going forward with this worthy enterprise.

Denny Street, in Fulton, which grew out of a mission enterprise in Rocketts, has made rapid strides in recent years, her membership having more than doubled. Congregations are large and growing, and the pastor, Rev. J. T. Routten, has won not only the hearts of his own people but holds a high place in the confidence and affections of this prosperous and improving section of our city.

The church at Barton Heights is doing a great

work for Methodism in that new and attractive community, and the pastor, Rev J. Sidney Peters, though for a long time embarrassed in his work by serious illness is laboring with great efficiency, and the work of God is prospering under his ministry

Epworth, the youngest of our church enterprises in Richmond, is an offshoot from Laurel Street Church, and was built under the leadership of the Rev. Travis J. Taylor. It is a valuable addition to the working force of Methodism in the southwestern section of the city.

Our history began when the Methodists had no church, but worshipped in the courthouse or in the open air. We have seen them provided by a godly woman with a place of meeting in the "Stable Church," where they worshipped until it could no longer accommodate the congregation. We have beheld the rise of the first church on the corner of Nineteenth and Franklin streets, built under great difficulties and under serious embarrassments. We have followed this church in its removal to what was then a more promising locality, on Franklin street near the Exchange Hotel. We have seen this mother-church send out colonies to all parts of the city, and the work of colonization taken up by the churches thus established until now every portion of the city and every suburb is provided with Methodist churches—not temporary chapels, but substantial and beautiful houses of worship. Beginning with one church, we now have fifteen; beginning with

twenty-eight members we now have six thousand. The following table shows by decades the increase in membership made by our church as compared with the progress made in the city's development:

YEAR.				Percentage of Increase in Church Membership.	Percentage of Increase in Population.
1820.	..	..		39.31	22.54
1830.	..			90.54	33.09
1840.	..	..		40.52	25.48
1850.	..	..		84.64	36.78
1860.	...	..	..	29.75	33.91
1870	..	..	..	29.93	34.63
1880.	...	..	..	53.70	26.51
1890.	..	..	..	55.44	24.84
1898.	...	...		46.00	27.50
Average.	...	..		52.20	29.475

It will be noticed that the last figures indicate the increase for eight years only. This table shows that whereas the increase of population in the city averaged less than thirty per cent. for each decade, the increase in church membership averaged more than fifty-two per cent. The net gain in church membership since 1870 is more than two hundred per cent., while for the preceding twenty years it was only sixty per cent.

There is an impression in some quarters that Methodism in Richmond, so far from advancing, is barely holding its own. Let those who entertain this opinion examine the following table and perhaps

they will come to a different conclusion. While the showing is not all we could desire, nor perhaps as good as it might have been, still it must be considered highly encouraging for the future of our church in this city.

	1880.	1890.	1898.
Church edifices... ..	8	10	14
Parsonages.. ..	1	2	7
Pastors...	9	11	14
Church members...	2,742	4,263	6,224
In Sunday schools. . . .	1,965	3,368	4,579
Salaries of pastors. . .	\$ 9,648	\$ 14,718	\$ 21,282
For missions, all sources.	1,050	3,577	3,636
Raised for all purposes. ...	27,454	43,379	69,387
Value of church property..	178,500	292,200	352,200

We are happy to know that other evangelical denominations in the city, with all of whom the Methodists have maintained the most fraternal relations, have shown a like zeal in the work of city evangelization. It may now be truly said that Richmond, where for so long a time there was but one church, is now a city of churches, with ample seating capacity to accommodate on any Lord's day the entire church-going population, both white and colored.

As we greet the coming century, we exclaim "Behold what hath God wrought!" What shall the future be? The future alone can answer; but let us all thank God and take courage. We have no ground for boasting; but we have strong reason for

gratitude for the past and for renewed consecration for the future. We have come into this great inheritance through the prayers, the zeal and the labors of our fathers, and we ought to hand it down to our children unimpaired in its vigor. God in his providence is opening new fields for the American church not only in our own land, but in other lands also; and not only in evangelistic work but in education and in literature. We ought to follow our founder, John Wesley, who subsidized the press and the school, and made all these agencies tributary to the gospel. Let our "Twentieth Century" movement show by its fruits what Southern Methodism can do. And above all let the world take knowledge of us that we have been with Christ, and exclaim, "Behold, how these Christians love one another." Let Richmond Methodism set an example for the Virginia Conference; and let the Virginia Conference, the oldest in the sisterhood of conferences, by unity and brotherly love, and by a holy zeal, set an example for Southern Methodism.

Brethren, the Old Ship of Zion flies at its mast-head the battle-signal, "Our Captain expects every man to do his duty."

II.

CENTENARY AND HER COLONIES.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM W. LEAR.

The celebration, in 1839, of the hundredth anniversary of the Wesleyan movement gave a distinct impetus to Methodism, both in England and America. Our English brethren in token of their gratitude to God for his goodness to them made during the year an offering of a million dollars, while our own thank-offerings amounted to six hundred thousand. The latter was a large sum for our people, whose incomes were even more modest than their numbers; but their wonderful history, which they had for the first time paused to recall, and the assurance which it gave them of the presence of God in their work, put them on their mettle and quickened their spirits for the highest endeavor. Our missionary contributions doubled in one year. New fields were occupied, new schools projected, new churches begun and new energy injected into enterprises already on hand.

There were in Richmond at this time two life centres of Methodism—Old Trinity and Shocco. Centennial rallies were held in both of these churches during the year. At the Trinity meeting the subscription for the thank-offering was started. Dr.

Leroy M. Lee, who was then editor of our church paper, gave out of his scanty salary one hundred dollars. Others followed with larger or smaller amounts, till the sum of eleven thousand dollars had been raised. About one-half of this amount was set aside to be used in the building of a new house of worship to take the place of Shocco. This new church, which, to perpetuate the memory of its origin, was to bear the name of Centenary, was not built without serious difficulties. The reputation which the early Methodists had made for loud singing and shouting still clung to the denomination, and when a suitable lot was sought in a popular locality the real estate dealers hesitated to sell for fear the presence of the church would lower the value of realty in the neighborhood. For two years those who had the matter in hand tried in vain to secure a lot and finally succeeded only by getting a disinterested party to buy for them. When it was learned that the purchaser represented Richard Whitfield, the leading layman of Shocco Church, the property owners in the neighborhood quickly took in the situation and sent Mr. Whitfield a proposition to take the lot off his hands at a large advance on the price he had paid for it. But the brethren refused to sell. Though the doctrine of falling from grace is in their creed, Methodists usually know a good thing when they get it, and generally hold on to it—when they have it sure enough.

The Rev. James A. Riddick was pastor of Shocco

Church at this time and took an active part in securing the lot and developing the plans for the new building. The record of the ministry of this man of God is in the annals of the church. It is not for me to tell here the story of his life. I saw him but a few days ago. It is a benediction to be in his presence. He dwells near the mountain top of religious experience and the glow and quiet of a summer sunset linger around him. Under the weight of fourscore years and more the tabernacle of clay is crumbling to dust, but his mental strength yet abides and his faith strengthens to the end. And with a delightful consciousness of the divine presence, he looks ahead to the crowning time with a smile of eager expectation.

Brother Riddick was succeeded at Shocco Church by the Rev. George W. Nolley, a man of splendid proportions, physical, mental and spiritual. He was a kinsman of Richmond Nolley and was cast in the same heroic mould. He dared do anything that the Master bade him do, or to suffer anything that duty called him to suffer; yet he was genial and guileless, and as gentle as a little child. He was converted at sixteen years of age. He had the unique experience of feeling, long before his conversion, that he was called to preach, and perhaps the no less unique experience of being licensed to preach without his knowledge or consent. For fifty-five consecutive years he answered to his name on the first day of the Annual Conference, and then, full of faith and

good works, he answered to the general roll-call of the saints in glory.

Brother Nolley was just such a man as the Shocco people needed at that time to push their new enterprise to completion, and it goes without saying that he did not sit idly by while others toiled. He was not, however, too busy building a new house for his flock to look after their spiritual life, and his ministry this year (1842) was attended by a sweeping revival, in which between one and two hundred souls were converted and brought into the church. From among the young ladies who were converted during this revival he selected his second wife, who bore him seven sons and daughters, six of whom are still living. Two of his daughters married Methodist preachers.

Owing to the fact that the time for holding the Annual Conference was changed in 1842 from February to November, there were two sessions of Conference that year, and Brother Nolley's pastorate was in consequence limited to nine months. But during that period the work on the new church was pushed so rapidly that it was ready for occupancy before he left the charge, though it was not completed and dedicated until the spring of the following year.

It does not fall within the purpose of this paper to review the later history of Centenary Church. Its success from the start and its continued prosperity after nearly sixty years justify the wisdom of its

founders and speak volumes for the piety of those who came after them. Since the church was first erected, it has been so greatly enlarged and improved that it is impossible to recognize in the present building the modest structure of former days.

The noble laymen who were active in the establishment of Centenary are deserving of more honorable mention than I can give them here. The original trustees were Richard Whitfield, William Evans, Thos. H. Lambeth (the father of Dr. S. S. Lambeth of our Conference), William Willis, John J. Binford and Henry Tatum. Richard Whitfield, who seems to have been the prime mover in the enterprise, was born in Yorkshire, England, in 1777. He was left an orphan at an early age, and was thrown entirely upon his own resources. When about twenty-four years old he embarked for America, landing in New York in 1801. While in New York he was converted and at once joined the Methodist Church. In 1807 he came to Richmond. His piety was of a generous and liberal character. His faith never wavered. As a business man he was sagacious, energetic and successful. His liberality abounded for every good work. Honored by the church with every lay office within its power he was efficient and useful in them all. With the increase of years he increased in heavenly virtues, until in 1866, at the ripe age of nearly ninety years, he went home to glory. In Centenary Church, which he had helped to build and where he had worshipped so long, Bishop Doggett preached

his funeral sermon and the sacred dust was laid away in Shocco Hill Cemetery to await the resurrection of the just. His descendants to the third generation are among us. May the mantle of this man of God ever rest upon them!

A brief mention of the churches that may be said to have grown out of Centenary will serve as a fitting close to this paper.

On a rainy Sunday afternoon in October, 1849, a few earnest workers from Centenary got together in a private house in the southwestern part of the city not far from the State Penitentiary, and organized a Sunday School with Watkins Taylor as superintendent. A few weeks afterwards a society was organized, and a house of worship (known as Oregon Chapel) was erected on the corner of Church street and Maiden Lane. The first pastor of the new church was the Rev. James E. Joyner, the second, the Rev. John L. Clark and the third, the Rev. Samuel L. Eskridge.

For a number of years Oregon was a small and struggling church, but under the ministry of the Rev. H. B. Cowles matters mightily improved. Then came the Rev. William P. Wright, who remained four years, and labored with untiring energy to build a new church. Before he left he had the pleasure of seeing the old structure in which this little band had so long worshipped, sold and the proceeds put into a larger enterprise on Laurel street. After a year Brother Wright was returned and the building

was completed during his second pastorate. Since then it has been greatly enlarged, and Laurel Street is now one of our most flourishing churches.

But Centenary did not exhaust all her energies in this one enterprise. Five years after the establishment of the Oregon society, a Sunday School was started in the home of Mrs. Bethel, an elect lady of our church, who lived on Main street near what is now known as Monroe Park. This school, out of which grew Sidney Chapel, had a very modest beginning, only seven pupils being enrolled. It was organized by Albert L. West, who for forty-seven years was a faithful and honored member of Centenary Church. He has so recently gone home that there is no need to tell Virginia Methodists about him. We never had a man who was more enthusiastic and energetic as a Sunday School worker than he. For many years, at much cost of time and energy, he watched over the little vine he had planted, and his faith was at last rewarded by seeing it blossom into a great church.

Sidney Chapel was built in 1856, two years after the organization of the Sunday School. In 1871, the Conference Mission Board made an appropriation of \$360.00 to Oregon and Sidney, and the Rev. George C. Vanderslice was sent as preacher in charge of the latter church. It proved to be a wise investment of the Lord's money. Gracious revivals accompanied the preaching of Brother Vanderslice through the whole four years of his ministry, and large numbers

were added to the church, so that by 1875 Sidney had become a self-supporting charge. Its name was then changed to Main Street Church. Brother Vanderslice was succeeded by the Rev. George H. Ray, who remained one year. The rapid growth of the congregation necessitated the building of a new church, which was soon accomplished through the generosity of our large-hearted layman, James B. Pace, and the beautiful Park Place Church stands to-day as a monument to his munificence. Park Place was dedicated in 1870, by Dr. John E. Edwards, who had been appointed its first pastor.

Out of Laurel Street grew Asbury (formerly Washington Street), and more recently Epworth, while from Centenary has sprung still another church—Highland Park. And so the good work goes on. May it continue till the church militant shall be merged into the church triumphant. And may the spirit of our fathers, who worked so well in the establishment of these churches, linger long in the hearts of their sons and daughters, making them workmen that need not to be ashamed.

III.

THE WORK OF THE LAYMAN'S UNION.

The Layman's Union of Richmond originated at a meeting of representatives of the Methodist churches of the city in the interest of the endowment fund of Randolph-Macon College. This meeting—which, by the way, resulted in the contribution of \$56,000 to the endowment fund by Richmond Methodists—was held at Pizzini's Parlors, March 3, 1887. There were about sixty persons present and the fraternal feeling manifested suggested the formation of a permanent organization for the general purposes of bringing the laity of the church together socially, and the maturing of plans for the more efficient prosecution of the work of church extension in the city. Specifically, the object was to co-operate with the Sunday School Society, which had alone undertaken the Home Mission work of the city, by looking after the material development of the church in unoccupied territory while the Society looked after its spiritual development.

The first meeting of the Union was held in June, 1887. At this meeting, which was largely attended,

Col. John P Branch was elected president. Shortly afterwards the Union in conjunction with the Sunday School Society moved a chapel from near the toll-gate on Mechanicsville pike to Howard's Grove, where the Sunday School Society was already at work. The little church thus started grew rapidly under the care of the Society, and in a little while the congregation built a handsome church on Fairmount Avenue.

In June, 1888, the Union and the Sunday School Society held a mass-meeting at Broad Street Church in the interest of church extension in the city. This meeting was presided over by Mr. John Morton, and nearly \$10,000 was raised for missionary purposes in the East and West ends of the city. This movement was watched with the deepest interest. The Rev. Dr. Garland expressed the opinion that if the work was prosecuted according to the plans adopted, it would solve the problem of Home Missions in the Southern Methodist Church. The money raised at this meeting was used partly to build what was known as Washington Street Church, at the corner of Cary and Washington streets in the West end, and partly to purchase a lot at the corner of Twenty-ninth and Marshall streets in the Eastern part of the city. Washington Street Church soon outgrew the neighborhood in which it was erected, and in a few years the building was moved to Lombardy street, between Grove and Hanover, and the name changed to Asbury Church.



COL. JOHN P. BRANCH.

For some years Trinity had conducted a mission school at the corner of Twenty-ninth and Marshall streets. This school was now turned over to the Sunday School Society, and the work was pushed with a view to the establishment of a church in that part of the city. By the aid of the Layman's Union the Sunday School Society erected St. James Church at a cost exceeding \$5,000. The success of this enterprise was due largely to the zeal and liberality of the late Robert H. Whitlock. These two churches, Asbury and Washington Street, are now among the most progressive churches in the city.

The work of the Union, of which but a partial account is here given, covers a period of about seven years. During this period of great activity it was presided over by Col. John P. Branch, Mr. John P. Morton and Mr. Arthur L. Lumsden successively.

Among the most zealous members of the Union were the late T. L. D. Walford and the late Charles H. Hasker.

The emphasis which the Union placed upon the connectional idea gave a new impulse to the work of church extension throughout the city, and resulted in the establishment of more churches during its short life than had been established in the forty years preceding its organization.

IV

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AND THE EPWORTH LEAGUE.

Sunday Schools are like mothers, in that while they have furnished much material for history, they have furnished scarcely any material for a history of themselves. The Sunday Schools of Richmond are not exceptions to the rule. Their deeds are recorded in the lives of men, not on parchments. In the general turning up of old manuscripts preparatory to the Centennial hardly anything came to light relating to the Sunday School work of the past. Even the Sunday School Society, which has been in operation for nearly forty years, and has done probably as much for Richmond Methodism as any other single agency, has preserved nothing from which one might get even a faint idea of the magnitude of its achievements. Almost the only record of real value is to be found in the present condition of the Sunday Schools of the city and vicinity. There are at present eighteen Sunday Schools in Richmond and suburbs, not including Manchester. The latest complete annual report available is for the year 1897. Of the 4,914 officers,

teachers and pupils then on the roll, 2,189 were members of the church. The conversions reported during the year aggregated 399. Eighty-eight indigent pupils were assisted, and the sum of \$4,084.84 was raised for all purposes. According to this report the largest Sunday School in the city was Union Station, having a membership of 763—Laurel Street coming next with 412 members, and Clay Street with 409. The membership in the other schools ranged from 394 (Denny Street) to forty-seven (Highland Springs). The largest number of conversions (eighty-eight) was reported from Union Station. Trinity assisted twenty indigent pupils, Centenary eighteen, Denny Street, Hasker Memorial and Laurel Street ten each, Union Station nine, St. James five and Epworth two.

The report for 1899 will hardly differ very materially from these figures. There has been some growth, though the present total membership is little in excess of five thousand. The schools are in a healthy condition, the character of the work is steadily improving, and the outlook is altogether promising.

The Sunday School Society continues its usefulness under the presidency of the Hon. Addison Maupin. Besides Mr. Maupin, this society has had ten presidents; viz: William Couling, Asa Snyder, William Willis, Jr., A. L. West, C. H. Hasker, R. A. Richardson, John Morton, C. W. Hunter, R. S. M. Valentine and Alfred Gary.

THE EPWORTH LEAGUE came into existence at so recent a date that it can hardly be said to have completed the first chapter of its history. The first League in Richmond was organized in 1892 at Clay Street Church by the pastor, the Rev. E. H. Rawlings. The second League was formed in 1893 at Fairmount under the pastorate of the Rev. H. E. Johnson. In 1894 Union Station Mission (Hasker Memorial) was added to the list, and during the following year Centenary, West End (Manchester), Laurel Street, Asbury, Union Station, Trinity, St. James, Park Place and Broad Street. In 1895 a Local Council was organized with a membership of fourteen Leagues. The first president of the Council was the Rev. J. W. Moore; the first secretary, Mr. Frank T. Bates, Jr. Mr. Moore was succeeded by Mr. E. W. Bandy of St. James Church, who continued in office until the present year, when he was succeeded by Mr. Frank L. Wells of Park Place.

The Richmond League has from the beginning occupied a prominent place in the general work. Perhaps no one did so much to get the organization under way in Virginia as the Rev. E. H. Rawlings, who is now serving his second term as pastor of Clay Street Church. Mr. Rawlings has been for several years a valuable member of the Epworth League Board of the Church, South. Of the present officers of the State League, the president, the Rev. W. B. Beauchamp, and the secretary, Mr. W. Reginald Walker, are members of Richmond Leagues.

While the League has not grown as rapidly in Richmond and vicinity as could have been desired the condition of the work as a whole is gratifying, and gives promise of a bright future. In most of our churches pastors have found the League an invaluable aid, especially in revival seasons.

In addition to the societies already mentioned Leagues are now in successful operation at Fifth Street and Asbury, Manchester, and Denny Street, this city.

The officers of the Local Council are: President, Mr. Frank L. Wells, Park Place; first vice-president, Mr. J. Frank Tiller, of Centenary; second vice-president, Mr. J. H. Busby, of Fifth Street, Manchester; third vice-president, Mrs. G. M. Smithdeal, Broad Street; secretary, Mr. Asa Johnson, Clay Street; treasurer, Dr. W. D. Willis, of Asbury.

MAKERS OF METHODISM IN RICHMOND.

I.

MEN THAT MADE METHODISM.

BY THE REV. JOHN J. LAFFERTY, D. L.

I have taken it as the task set me, to tell of the type of men in the ministry who made Methodism in this capital of Virginia.

Our Church in Richmond has gained, as do all growing denominations, its accretions in part from the country chapels. In the pioneer period the changes of ministers were frequent. At first they remained but three or six months in a pastorate. They were now in the North, next year in the South. The evangelist of Vermont would pass during one revolving year to the frontiersmen of Daniel Boone in Kentucky or to the rice regions of Carolina.

When an average itinerant of that age is described, we know the entire body of ministers.

The era of the American Revolution was signalized by phenomenal men—statesmen and warriors. Mr. Gladstone gave opinion that the Constitution of the United States was the greatest single product of the human mind at any given period. It seems Providence prepared the men for the need and occasion. The early annals of our Church in this country

coerces to the conclusion that God raised up fit men for the demands of religion in the new nation. When God intends "to turn the world upside down," he selects stout instruments.

Statesmanship, constitutions and governments could have success only among a people fit for self-control by reason of moral poise. The philosophic historian must reckon Methodism as a mighty factor in the experiment of ordered liberty on this new continent. It must be conceded that Methodism to no little degree made ready the soil in which has grown this great banyan tree of popular government, with its spreading shade, protecting boughs, widening, self-rooting power. There remains to be written a treatise giving full credit to the saddle-bag cohorts for their work as patriots in building up this vast temple of free institutions—a wonder to the earth's nations. Such a theme does not fall within the limits prescribed by the programme for my hour. I draw myself within narrower confines.

Churches like nations have birth from the genius of giants. The tribe dates its genesis to victorious and mighty men—heroic founders. The Greek sung the song of "Troy divine," captured by Argive warriors, Agamemnon, Ajax, Achilles—great chieftains whose prowess and genius for affairs had made powerful peoples by the sunny sea and along the "isles of Greece." The story of martial ancestors inspired the sons to make Marathon, Thermopylæ, Salamis scenes of unperishing glory. And so too, the forti-

tude that kept at bay, under the walls of Troy, for ten long years the marshalled host of the Hellenes by the Scamander and Simois, till strategy and hostile gods prevailed over courage, was cherished on the shores of distant Latium, where the exiles from Priam's fated and royal city, reared a mightier Illium on the banks of the Tiber. The thrilling numbers of the *Ænead* surcharged the clans of Romulus and Remus in Alba Longa to do and dare as worthy of Hector and the heroes, their ancestors.

It must not be forgotten that "Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war." We come to recount the deeds of men who wrought righteousness in the earth by personal sacrifices and exertions worthy of all praise. If mortal ever merited the title of hero the American itinerant can justly claim it. We honor ourselves in recalling his career. Not since the days of Paul, have there appeared apostolic men with equal zeal, loyalty to Jesus and self-abnegation. They were engaged in the greatest religious movement since the apostolic age. Or, to use the words of a Presbyterian author, "the rise of Methodism is among the greatest marvels of human history." It will amaze you, if you have not read the page of the Church's progress, to know that the pioneers of Methodism surpassed even the apostles in results. "Methodism gained nearly three times as many members to its Communion in its first century as the Apostolic Church during its first century." This statement, true to the letter, is below exact

figures. The numbers inside our ranks are only a part of the sheaves of our sowing and reaping. Virtue went out of our ministry to other pulpits. We harvested only two-thirds of our crop of converts. Who can tabulate the influence of Methodism beyond our pale?

We must estimate the difficulties overcome to rightly gauge the force that crushed them. The ballistic power of a gun has relation to the resistance to be overcome. The missile that pierces the prepared and protected plate of great thickness and toughness wins upon the admiration of naval experts. The shattered steel sheath of the ship certifies the velocity, hardness, impact of the projectile.

What were the obstacles to Methodism—what the resources to master them? As the century closes, Methodism in America is the national Church. It has its millions of members, noble temples in the cities, countless chapels in the country, its colleges in many Commonwealths. American Methodism builds a thousand churches each year. The preachers now “go” to their pastorates in Pullman palace coaches. The chief citizens welcome them on arrival. The elegant official residence of our “clergy” vies with the architecture and comforts of bank presidents. Costly choirs “raise the tune.” In primitive organizations, the chieftain chosen for statue, force, edged sword, led with claymore in his good, right hand, cleaving a path through the foes. The “Major General” in after ages can sit in a private

car, subduing heat by "cooling drinks" and bath tubs, directing movements of troops by "field wire." Once the Sheik planned and in person charged "the armies of the alien." Progress of events puts the army in battle array and the chief captain in the rear. Von Moltke reading Dickens on the grassy slope far from the shot of French artillery, and Richard of the Lion Heart, with battle ax swinging in the air, making a circle of metallic sheen, as it splits skulls of Saracens, measure the diameter of distance made in the art of war. The pioneer preacher of our Church in this country was Richard and Von Moltke in one. He thought out the campaign and brought it to victory by his own presence and prowess. Men making large history seldom record their achievements—the pen fits the fingers of sedentary champions, the sword fits the iron grip of centurions. The only information of many "men of statue" in the heroic age of our Church is dim tradition. They brought things to pass and their deeds are testimony and eulogy. The Himalayas are proof of the power that heaved this range of rocks into the clouds. Methodism is a stupendous achievement. There surely were "giants in those days," for feeble muscle erects no pyramid on the plain.

When the little band of evangelists, led by Asbury a hundred years ago began, they were confronted by difficulties that would have staggered men if their "lives had been dear unto themselves." Religion had lost its power in the land. The pulpits seemed

slumbering. They aroused themselves only to assail the Methodist preachers. The parsons of the Church of England in the South had become a by-word of contempt. They were fed on taxes, wrung from a protesting people. Their lives were scandalous. There were rare exceptions. The devout Devereux Jarratt, the rector of Sapony, Butterwood, in Virginia, showed kindness to the Methodists and incurred the displeasure of his brother clergy. The evangelical preachers found no favor with such ministers. Jarratt wrote that only one rector in Virginia out of ninety-four was a devout man. There was a statute in the Virginia Code that "ministers shall not give themselves to riot, playing at dice, cards and other unlawful games, but that at all times convenient they shall hear or read somewhat of the Scriptures." One had to be "tied in his gig" to prevent tumbling out. When the precentor (leader of singing) announced the hymn "was out," the drowsy parson in the pulpit muttered, "Fill it up again." We know the depraved condition of morals in England among many clergy. The official ecclesiastic in the colonies was "tarred with the same stick." In America "high Church officials and ministers drank immoderately without seriously compromising their position." The Rev. Leonard Woods said, "I remember forty ministers who were intemperate." "A great many deacons in New England died drunkards." "I have a list of 123 intemperate deacons in Massachusetts; forty-three became sots."

Bishop Meade speaks of the "vices" of the clergy in Virginia. "In Maryland the Lord's Day was profaned, religion despised and all notorious vices committed, so that it became a Sodom of uncleanness and a pest-house of iniquity." Infidel books were sold for a small price or given away, and "leading statesmen were Atheists or Deists." "With few exceptions all the great men engaged in laying the foundation of the government of the United States" held infidel sentiments. Chancellor Kent said: "In my younger days there were very few professional men that were not infidels." Bishop Meade records: "I can truly say that in every educated young man in Virginia whom I met I expected to find a skeptic, if not an avowed unbeliever." Princeton College and William and Mary were "hotbeds of infidelity." Transylvania University, Kentucky, founded by the Presbyterians, was wrested from them by infidelity. Ordinations of ministers in New England were made occasion for festivity, often ended in an "ordination ball," accompanied with "copious drinking." The continental army of General Washington, when disbanded, "poisoned every community with skepticism and immorality." In 1789 the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in their address say, "a dissolution of religious society seems threatened." In Kentucky and in other States, newly settled, there was fearful immorality. Peter Cartright says Kentucky was called "Rogues' Harbor" and the bad element was "in

the majority.” Under Whitefield’s preaching in New England a number of Congregational ministers were converted. And the church members in this immoral condition and their clergy stood opposing the Methodist preachers.

A dozen ministers dare to inaugurate a campaign against sodden vice in low places, and against infidelity, almost universal among the intelligent citizenship. These itinerants were without money, social influence, homeless, hated, yet they threw themselves into the battle with a courage equal to the fortitude of a Paul. The continent, from Canada to the lands of the red savages in upper Georgia and on the Ohio, was their parish. American civilization was a narrow strip along the Atlantic from Maine to Florida, with the savages on the western and southern border. There was no turnpike, no stage, seldom a bridge, few ferries. Rivers must be crossed by swimming. Roads were trails. The itinerant might secure lodging in a one-room hut, “with husband, wife and six children, one always moving about,” and a piece of fat bacon and corn-pone for breakfast. It was not uncommon to be refused a shelter. Drenched, he must lay down in the forest to rise at dawn bitten by frost, and ride on, hungry. In New York a young woman repulsed Bishop Asbury, who was sick, from her door and he rode on in darkness and tempest, refused again and again. Jesse Lee, the apostle to New England, preached three months without an invitation to a house. These apostolic



GEORGE FERGUSSON

men here and there were put in jail for telling men of a Saviour. The mob in Charleston, S. C., dragged the saintly and eloquent Douherty to the town pump and would have drowned him but for a kind woman using her apron to stop the spout. He caught a cold that killed him. Not a few carried scars. Garrettson was left for dead on the roadside. A woman relieved him. A planter in Mississippi drove Richmond Nolley from the smoke-stack of his sugar mill, where he was warming himself. Lee was glad to find shelter in South Carolina "in a log cabin without doors, with thirty to forty hogs sleeping under the house."

Asbury, the Bishop, kept a journal. He gives a glimpse into sufferings. He travelled from Canada to the frontier in Georgia and Kentucky, chiefly on horseback. He crossed the Alleghanies sixty times along bear trails. He mentions the three ranges between North Carolina and Virginia he was accustomed to cross, which he calls, "first steel, second stone, third iron, they are right difficult to climb." "Awful thunder and lightning, accompanied by heavy rain," attended the trip. "We crept for shelter into a little dirty house where the filth might have been taken from the floor with a spade." They were wet; could get no fire as the wood was soaked. In the mean time "both horses were foundered and had sore backs." In passing through West Virginia, he and his companions could find no food but "what grew in the woods." His lodging is described. "I

lay on the floor on a few deerskins with the fleas. Brothers Phoebus and Cook took to the woods."

We can appreciate his cry, "O how glad should I be of a plain clean plank to lie on, as preferable to most beds." He gives the reason. "The beds are in a bad state, the floors are worse." It was a luxury to get into the shed part of a cabin with a bed mounted on posts driven in the ground with clapboards on cross poles. He wore a "brimstone shirt" for weeks to relieve him of a tormenting malady contracted in some filthy bed. He relates that cold corn-bread and cucumbers were his sole food while sighing for a bowl of milk. A companion tells us the Bishop "rode all day in a storm, taking calomel every two hours," till he loaded up with "eighty grains" of this metallic drug. He pushed ahead, with "great blisters drawing on his body." These men of God had a rule "that no weather a man can live in, must stop a preacher." For forty-five years he, a delicate man, often ill, travelled a distance equal to the circumference of the globe every four years. He was accustomed to rise by dawn, and ride twenty miles to breakfast, preaching two or three times a day and covering forty to fifty miles. He attended 224 Conferences and ordained 4,000 ministers; preached 16,000 times. He continued his tours till age and disease had smitten him sorely. His travelling companion lifted him from his horse. In this city he rested himself on a table and preached his last sermon. Then helped to his horse he pressed northward, but

death gave him his rest in Spottsylvania County. Such was Francis Asbury—apostle and statesman, worthy of any age of the church.

Asbury endured hardships; yet his office gave him advantage over his brethren in comforts. If the chief captain suffered these things, what were the deprivations of the men in the ranks? They left no word of complaint, no record of exploit; even their tombs are unknown. “They labored, suffered and triumphed in obscurity. No admiring population to cheer them on. No great newspaper gazetted them into fame.” When a call came from the men on the frontier, for more preachers to help, directions were given to send no man who was “afraid to die.” It was added, “their lives will be in jeopardy from the red men.” The Rev. Thomas Ware relates that while preaching the alarm was raised, “Indians!” Two lads came running and shouted, “The Indians have killed mother.” It was true. The outlaw and the Indian were there. The red barbarian killed all. The members of “Rogues’ Harbor” preferred to murder a Methodist itinerant to heeding him. Richmond Nolley was found frozen to death on his route to fill an appointment for preaching. He died on his knees. Only fibre of steel could hold out against such privations, toil and miasma. Dauntless courage nerved every breast.

These apostles left home, friends, parents, sisters and brothers behind them. Before them were strangers, sacrifices, wanderings. They could hope only for sub-

sistence. They could not draw drafts on a missionary treasury. Had one been a Baptist or Presbyterian, he might have had hope of meeting, in a new place, people friendly to him, but there were no Methodists. His business was to plant.

There was a frontier settlement called the Natchez country on the Mississippi. The trail led through the Indian tribes of Georgia and Alabama. They were at times on the war-path. Gibson volunteered to visit Natchez. He rode to the Cumberland River, sold his horse, bought a canoe, put bridle and saddlebags in the boat, floated on the Cumberland to the Ohio, down it to the Mississippi, on to "Circuit." Such was the sanctified grit of that generation. And what was the earthly gain? Let the historian record one specimen. The condition of an itinerant who had visited nearly every cabin in wide regions, preaching in North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, praying with the inmates of the log homes, is described, "patch above patch until the patches themselves were worn out, bare kneed, bare elbowed, without a cent in his pocket or a friend to give him a new garment," yet worthy of the raiment of a prince. Asbury, at a Conference, was so moved at the ragged appearance of these noble men, that he records how he "parted with my watch, my coat, my shirt" to supply their need. One preacher wore out one sleeve of his coat but continued to expound, though one arm had only a shirt sleeve.

The achievements of these evangelists are without

a parallel. The men who companied with Jesus did not in the same time accomplish equal results. They were highly endowed. Jesse Lee, a Virginian, had extraordinary gifts. At a time when Methodism was ridiculed, Lee was elected chaplain to Congress and reëlected. He retired of his own will. There were statesmen, jurists, orators in Congress. They selected Lee to preach on each Sabbath. He ranks with the greatest Americans of that notable era.

The Rev. Edward Drumgoole, of Brunswick County, was distinctly a man of might. His weight, tact and godliness prevented a split in early Methodism. "High order of intellect, deep piety, great moral worth, eloquent, effective, original, needing not to repeat sermons, unassuming." The late Rev. Benjamin Devany spoke of his discourses as "awfully sublime beyond description, with the most thrilling effect I ever witnessed." He was born in Ireland and inherited the genius of his people. At eighty-one he was still a master of assemblies.

There is no portrait of Drumgoole, but our State Library has a printed image of his great son, a member of Congress, and in the opinion of Mr. Madison, equal to the presidency of the United States which was within his reach. His face testifies to the greatness of the statesman and orator.

John Easter, of Mecklenburg county, lives in history as a spiritual wonder. Unlettered and rude in speech, he dominated vast crowds. Like Elijah he carried the keys to the clouds. When a storm was

nearly over-head, threatening a great congregation in the woods, and the people were restless, he called on God to protect the audience. The cloud divided, raining on each side of the grounds, but not a drop falling on man or woman. Next day a shower came upon the land not watered the day before. On another occasion, in the forest, there was a sudden noise in the tree-tops as if a hurricane was passing, though not a leaf moved. This display was followed by a descent of the Spirit, and there arose strong cries for mercy and shouts of joy. These are unquestioned facts. Tradition has brought down many kindred demonstrations.

Among his converts were Enoch George and William McKendree, two bishops.

The men who compassed this American Reformation were endowed with phenomenal powers. They were not scholars, though one would be surprised at the extent of their reading. Lee one year read five thousand pages while, preaching every day, riding forty miles. Among the volumes was a work of Aristotle. They had "mental vigor, shrewdness, extraordinary knowledge of human nature; many of them commanded an overwhelming eloquence." It cannot be questioned that among these itinerants were men matching with Patrick Henry in prevailing speech. Mr. Asbury, always careful in speech, mentions one as equal to Jefferson and Madison in native outfit. They were men of superior parts. The first governor of Ohio was a Methodist preacher. A

supreme judge and a district judge, on the inauguration of that State, each an itinerant. One was Philip Gatch, who had lost an eye by persecution. Bishop Coke, a Doctor of Civil Laws from Oxford, misled by their homespun suits in thinking them common men, was so surprised on hearing them preach that he exclaimed in his impetuous manner, "I can't preach a bit, I can't preach a bit!" So in debate, it was the wrestling of giants—nothing new has been added to their arguments. Their code, government, customs make clear the legislators were wise. They had pathos, humor, and wit. Lee was the Sidney Smith of the itinerancy—quick at repartee. They could terrify as well as win. They shook one world with the thunders of another. When a pioneer preacher of that epoch spoke to the people it soon became "very tempestuous around about."

The displays of their spiritual and mental force are marvels. As Josiah Everett, of Virginia, began his services a thunder-cloud approached. He prayed for it to come nearer. It roared. "O Lord, nearer and nearer." The house blazed with electric flame. There was a great outcry for mercy. One of the scared sinners applied to a magistrate to restrain Everett. "If he had asked a third time, there would not have been one of us alive." The squire was shy of such a master of such a weapon.

In 1787 the converts in Sussex were sixteen hundred; in Brunswick, eighteen hundred; Amelia, eight hundred. Audiences of five thousand to ten

thousand assembled to hear these apostles. At two camp-meetings on the Eastern Shore there were two thousand converts. Rev. Jacob Kobler, of Fredericksburg, pioneer to Ohio, could count only twenty-five Methodists in the State. In less than forty years there were one hundred thousand. A log meeting-house on Sam's Creek in Maryland was the beginning of American Methodism. Strawbridge, an Irish preacher, was the single apostle to the continent. In 1899 the Methodists are millions. Their adherents number every third citizen.

The other churches had the start of the Methodists. The Baptist began in 1638; the Presbyterian in 1684; the Episcopal in 1600. The Methodists organized in 1784. The census shows that our church numbers one million and a half more than the regular Baptists, three millions more than the Presbyterian and three and three-quarter millions in excess of the Episcopalian. These denominations were working two hundred, one hundred and fifty, and one hundred years before we began. In 1784 we had no college; now, three hundred.

Nothing could withstand the "thundering legion" on horseback. The proud were humbled; the scoffer fell flat and howled in horror. Jesse Lee records scenes of interest. "Here were many of the first quality in the country wallowing in the dust, with their silks, broadcloth, powdered heads, rings and ruffles. And some of them so convulsed they could neither speak nor stir." At another revival he

reports that the "roarings could be heard over a mile"—such the loud cries for mercy. A "Baptist came in the church to bring out his sister before she 'disgraced herself.' He fell down and began to cry out, 'Save or I sink into hell.'" A gang of mockers remained near the church during a revival. One went to report. He tumbled to the earth and yelled for the prayers of the Christians. A doctor fetched a vial of hartshorn to relieve a penitent. He and his liquid medicine rolled over on the floor while he set up a clamor for pardon and pity. Under the preaching of men like Benjamin Abbott hundreds fell prostrate. Southey says Abbott not only threw his hearer into fits, but fainted himself. "The people screamed and clung to each other" while Abbott preached during a storm. At a camp-meeting in Kentucky three thousand were struck down. It was a common event for the "floor and the yard" to be used to "lay out" the stricken sinners. The scornful infidel, the loud ranter against religion, equally with the plain people, went down before the mighty power of God.

A band of young men, chiefly from the agricultural class (Virginia contributing many notable ones), attempt to evangelize a continent of commonwealths. Infidelity in high places ridicules them. The priests and the people oppose. The long distances and bad roads hinder. The preachers are poor. A war rages in the civilized sections and bloody barbarians murder families on the frontier. Paul, confronted with such

difficulties, might have cried out, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

May it not be said that Asbury, Lee, Garrettson, Dickens, McKendree, Drumgoole, McHenry, Poythress and their colaborers fertilized the statesmanship of Madison, Hamilton, Jefferson. America without Methodism could not have been the Republic of 1899. Greece had leaders without peers in the past or present, but the Hellenes never had a sufficient moral soil to grow a great nation, free from factions and internecine strife.

The men that seeded down the people with godliness at this juncture deserve well of the Republic.

So severe was the service that in a few years the young men had a weather-beaten look. They died early. Exposure, bad fare, ceaseless exertions undermined health. We have meagre memoranda of their lives. Their works and wonders measure the men for eye of posterity. A controlling aim absorbed their attention and commanded their lives—saving men. They did not wait for a "call," or chaffer about salary. They went where needed, hailing men to a better life, under a tree, in a barn, in a court-house. While one spoke the words of this life in Richmond, Boston, Charleston, another was following a trail, yet red with blood of butchered travellers by the "Hazzle Patch" and "Crab Orchard," to the settlement in Kentucky, where Tory, murderer, bandit had fled to escape the law. In the wigwam of the savage, the hut of the slave, in the hall of the planter, the voice of the missionary was heard.

One circuit embraced an entire State. In Virginia a single charge took in fourteen counties in this Commonwealth and two across the Roanoke. Lee weighed 250 pounds, yet rode the United States on horseback, delivering 270 sermons a year. Asbury called him "steel." Bishop McKendree, after forty years of touring throughout the whole nation, continued to journey through mud and over mountains, though "afflicted with rheumatism, piles, hernia, vertigo, asthma." The older Bishop, Asbury, is described as he reached Baltimore: "Mr. Asbury came into the city wrapped up in a blanket and habited like an Indian, with his clothes worn out." Behold the state and circumstance of this chief of the Church. The Archbishop of York, in his palace, with pay of \$75,000 per annum, could see nothing apostolic in this "Paul, the aged." There is an incident in his journal that tells how absorbed he was in his one task. In the three volumes there is no mention of the battles of the Revolutionary War, nor of the organization of the Continental Congress, not even an allusion to the Declaration of Independence! Such was Asbury. Jesse Lee was only second to him, if second at all. Lee tied in the ballot for the bishopric Mr. Whatcoat. Defeated, as Lee was, by the base influence and infamous deed of a man who soon "took orders," detected after the election, yet he preached at dawn at the market-house in Baltimore next morning, with an unction and eloquence above any minister at the General Conference, and

he records the sessions as sweetest seasons of love and divine joy. Such was the spirit of the leaders.

Seldom does sculptured stone mark the dust of intrepid heroes that made Methodism. The Church itself is their monument. The building is the silent eulogy of the architect. Institutions portray the men of valor that created them. The mighty spirits of that epochal period are the giant mould in which Methodism was cast and fashioned. Our grand system is the lengthened shadow of its founders. Where a baronial home is built of a single tree we know it is a Red-Wood of the Sierras.

It is a law of life that victories are achieved only at personal cost. The harvest follows when men "go forth weeping, bearing precious seed." Christianity has its roots in the earth, fattened by the blood of martyrs. Methodism had birth from the loins of heroes. Let us salute their memory.

II.

GEORGE FERGUSSON, SAMUEL PUTNEY
AND WILLIAM WILLIS.

BY THE REV. JAMES C. REED.

The stability and perpetuity of a building depend upon the foundation and the character of the material used in the laying of the foundation. If the foundation be laid upon the rock, and the material used in laying it be stones true and tried, then neither descending rain, nor rushing flood, nor winds that blow however fierce and strong, shall cause that house to fall.

The church is founded on the Rock, Christ Jesus. "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." The stones which go into this spiritual temple of God, from foundation to topmost turret, are men redeemed and washed in the precious blood of Jesus. "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (I Peter 2: 5.) "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ

himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit." (Eph. 2: 20-22.) Such were the men who began the work of Methodism in Richmond and laid the foundations. They were soundly converted men. Their feet, as they so often sung, had been taken from the miry clay and placed upon the Rock of Ages. They knew whom they had believed. The Spirit of God had written his pardon "in fleshy tables of the heart" and they became living epistles "known and read of all men."

Among those who took an active part in the beginning of Methodism in this city, I am permitted to speak at this hour of George Fergusson, Samuel Putney and William Willis. These men of God, and of the olden times, filled well their places as "lively stones" in the laying of the foundations of the Methodist Church in the capital of the Old Dominion. Their bodies have long since mouldered into dust, but the spiritual influence of their consecrated hearts and holy lives, still lives and will continue to live in the Methodism of this city, until God's great spiritual temple shall be completed and "the headstone be laid with shoutings, crying Grace, grace unto it." Each of these present to us a peculiar phase or characteristic of Methodist experience and work in their day. It is to be exceedingly regretted that such scant memorabilia should be left of the lives

of men so potent for good. The characteristic which will be mentioned as descriptive of each was in a large measure possessed and illustrated by all, and it is hard to decide in which department each excelled, where all were so gifted, active, and useful.

GEORGE FERGUSSON, the eldest of this *triumviri*, was born January 22, 1795, and died September 20, 1864, aged sixty-nine years. Within these dates are enclosed a long and useful life. A member of the first Trinity Church for many years, he subsequently held his membership at Union Station. His funeral sermon was preached in that church by Dr. W W Bennett. His son, John W Fergusson, is an honored member and steward of Trinity Church to-day.

Brother George Fergusson may well stand as a type of the old time Methodist singer. He was of a fervent temperament and the fervor and glow of his spirit found expression in sacred song. It is true that he was a class-leader and a steward, and filled well these offices in the church; a man also of power in prayer; but he was especially gifted in song. The hymns of Charles Wesley fitted well his lips, and expressed the experiences of his fervent soul. The early Methodists sang much and well. John Wesley gave much attention to this handmaid of religion. Wesley himself was no mean poet and musician, and his people are noted for their eminent musical skill to this day; but the lips and soul of his brother Charles were touched with a coal from the altar of

God for this peculiar service. The old time Methodists sang well, because they sang with the Spirit and with the understanding. They may have occasionally slipped up on a flat, and in turning the tune knocked off the corner of a sharp, but the singing was not flat, and its divine power was "sharper than a two-edged sword" to penetrate the hearts of men and turn them to God.

The hymns of Charles Wesley are the best the world ever saw. They are the best of poetry—thoroughly scriptural, and expressing the feelings of the human soul in all of its varied experiences. As Abel Stevens has well said, "They march at times, like lengthened processions with solemn grandeur; they sweep at other times like chariots of fire through the heavens; they are broken like the sobs of grief at the grave side, and play like the joyful affection of childhood at the hearth, or shout like victors in the fray of battle."

SAMUEL PUTNEY stands before us as a type of the old time Methodist class-leader. A fatherless boy, seventeen years of age, was walking down Franklin street in this city one Sabbath morning in May, 1818, and making enquiries for a place of worship. He was directed to the corner of Nineteenth and Franklin streets, and on entering the church found himself in an old-fashioned Methodist class-meeting, and was at home. That fatherless boy was Samuel Putney. He was born near Boston, Mass., August, 1801, and came to Richmond in May, 1818, and died April 28,



SAMUEL PUTNEY.

1880. The following facts and quotations are taken from a sketch written by Dr. John E. Edwards:

“ Mr. Putney lost his father by death when he was a mere child. He was thrown upon his own resources while yet a boy. By what he regarded as a providential opening he was invited to a business house in Richmond when he was but seventeen years of age. Self-reliant and trusting in God, he left his home, his mother, his associates and friends, and came to Richmond, where he landed, May, 1818, and commenced his business life in a merchantile shoe store on Main street.

“ His early religious training had been under the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Emmerson of the Congregational denomination. When but thirteen years of age he became shocked and offended by the doctrines he heard from the pulpit, touching the possible damnation of infants. He forsook that Church, walked Sunday after Sunday three or four miles to a Methodist Church, professed conversion at that early age, joined the Methodist Church, and brought his certificate of Church membership with him, which he deposited the Sunday after his arrival with the only Methodist Church then in Richmond, located at the corner of what is now Nineteenth and Franklin streets. He at once joined the Sunday School (which had been organized by Miss Polly Bowles) and was soon taking an active interest in the work of the Church.”

As a man of business Samuel Putney took high

rank. Dr. Edwards, in describing him as a man of business, says: "Mr. Putney's firm and unshaken adherence to principles of rectitude, honesty and integrity laid the foundation of his business success."

"He amassed a fortune, and at the commencement of the late Civil War retired from active business with an ample competency for the future of his life."

"He was gentle, courteous in his manner; warm and sympathetic in impulses. His hospitality unbounded, his charity to the poor unstinted, and his liberality to the Church—its enterprises and benevolent objects—munificent and princely. In the course of his long connection with the Church in Richmond, he saw all of the houses of worship now occupied by the Methodists erected; and was a liberal contributor to them all." He was the next to the largest contributor to the erection of Broad Street Church. "One of the last acts of his life was to reslate the roof and reconstruct the steeple of Broad Street Church, at a personal cost of \$3,000."

He was never absent, unless providentially hindered, from the public services of the sanctuary. "The Wednesday-night lecture and Friday-night prayer-meeting always found him present. He attended the official meetings of the church with a punctuality which never wavered. In all his Christian duties he was a model."

Samuel Putney was early in life made a *class-leader*. In this means of grace he excelled, and became a helper to many a doubting and sorely tried child of

God. He had an experience of divine grace in his own heart and knew how to lead the troubled soul out of darkness into light.

The old time Methodists believed in, sought and obtained the conscious assurance of pardoned sin. They believed that men in this life might be saved from sin and have the witness of the Holy Ghost attesting the fact of their salvation. This was not the prevailing belief of those by whom they were surrounded. The popular teaching in that day ran somewhat on this wise: "If you seek religion you won't find it; if you find it, you won't know it; if you know it, you haven't got it; if you get it, you can't lose it; if you lose it, you never had it." The teaching of the Methodists ran quite the reverse: "If you seek religion, you will find it; if you find it, you will know it; if you know it, you have got it; if you get it, you may lose it; if you lose it, you must have had it." The class-meeting was a means of grace to bring men to a conscious knowledge of sins forgiven, and then to help them keep the blessed assurance, and grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Samuel Putney, though a man of large business cares, was never too busy to leave his temporal business in the daytime, and with a glad heart go to meet his class and talk of heavenly things. Diligent in business, he was also fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

WILLIAM WILLIS stands before us as a man of great power in prayer. He was born in Henrico

County February 5, 1802, and died in this city March 17, 1872. At the time of his death he was a member of Broad Street Church, and his funeral services were held in that church, Dr. John E. Edwards preaching the sermon. In a sketch by Dr. Edwards, written shortly afterwards, we find the following faithful portraiture of this man of God:

As a man of sterling integrity, probity and honor, he had no superiors, and but too few equals. He was loved, honored and respected by all who knew him. He professed conversion under the ministry of Rev. Joseph Carson in the great revival in the old Methodist Church in Richmond in 1826, joined the church, was class-leader, steward, recording steward, Sunday school superintendent—filling every position with honor and credit to himself, and profit to the church. He was a decided Methodist, but no bigot. He was an eminent Christian, uniform, quiet, consistent. His life and conversation commanded the respect and confidence of all who were brought in association with him. Take him all in all we shall rarely look upon his like again. One who knew him long and intimately remarked that “he never knew him to utter an indiscreet word. He loved his church. He was eloquent and powerful in prayer.”

The Methodists of the olden times believed in prayer and lived much on their knees. They had their places of prayer and times for prayer and they allowed nothing to hinder their approaches to the throne of grace. They heard the voice of their

divine Lord saying, "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." The secret place of prayer heard their cries and groans, and they came forth having power with God and prevailing with man. Whose heart has not been thrilled during this Centennial by Dr. Brown's description of that scene at the last service in Old Trinity, when William Willis prayed for a former pastor who had fallen astray?

Has the Church lost the power of prevailing prayer? If we lived to-day as much on our knees as did the old Methodist fathers would not the same mighty results that followed their labors follow ours?

Oh, for more men like George Fergusson, Samuel Putney and William Willis in this our day!

III.

THE REV PHILIP COURTNEY.

Probably no man did more for Methodism in Richmond at the beginning than the Rev. Philip Courtney, for more than sixty years an honored local preacher in our church. He was born in the county of King and Queen December 19, 1779. In 1786 his father, who was a Baptist minister, moved with his family to New Kent where they lived seven years. Here Philip, to use his own language, enjoyed the advantages of an old field school, where in three years he learned all that the master could teach. After leaving school he worked on the farm until 1795, when the family moved to Richmond. As a youth he always had an eager desire for an education, but his circumstances in life were not favorable, and after many efforts to obtain a position favorable to his intellectual advancement he resigned himself to learn a trade and entered the service of a tailor for that purpose. While thus engaged his chief delight was in reading, and having a retentive memory he derived great advantage, as he tells us, from spending his leisure moments in this manner. He was married in 1799. About this time the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in Richmond under the pas-

toral care of Rev. Thomas Lyell, then of the Baltimore Conference. The preaching of the Methodists soon attracted Mr. Courtney and in 1800 he and his wife were converted and joined the church. He at once took an active part in church work, was appointed a class leader, made himself useful as an exhorter, and in 1809 was licensed to preach. In 1816 he was ordained deacon by Bishop McKendree and elder four years afterward by Bishop George. In 1822 he was elected manager of the Bible Society of Virginia, and in 1825 became principal of the male department of the Lancasterian School of Richmond. He continued in this position until 1846 when he was transferred to the female department, over which he presided the remainder of his life. For many years he was president of the Bible Society of Virginia. It is said that his manners were exceedingly affable and pleasing, and that his whole bearing was gentle and courteous.

At the time of his death, which occurred September 10, 1865, he was verging on ninety years of age; but until he had long passed fourscore years, he had retained his vigor and elasticity of body and mind in an extraordinary degree. Through all his long life he enjoyed, without interruption, the confidence, respect and affection of as large a portion of the citizens as any man that ever lived in the city. As long as he was able to stand up in the pulpit, he continued, as opportunity presented, to preach the gospel. In an appreciative sketch of his life the

“ Episcopal Methodist ” described him as animated, earnest and spiritual in his ministrations. He never grew stale, but to the last was heard by those who had heard him all their lives, with unabated interest, profit and pleasure. He was a man of a high grade of piety. His life was almost faultless; his career unsullied. As a preacher, and as a teacher, he preserved a spotless and unblemished reputation. His conversational powers were singularly fine. He possessed an inexhaustible supply of good humor and a fund of pleasing anecdote, which, together with the treasures of a remarkable memory, made him a delightful companion for the passing hour in whatever circle he might be thrown. He was a man of excellent spirit, faithful in all the relations of life, full of zeal for the work of the Lord and eminently useful in his day and generation.



WILLIAM ALLISON.

IV

WILLIAM ALLISON.

BY WILLIAM G. STARR, D. D.

An epoch is impossible as a distinct space in history, if we leave out the men who made it memorable by their presence and their work.

A church on earth is a congregation of souls, but the construction of such an organization is dependent upon the wisdom and skill of some master-builder.

The gathering of assemblies and the erection of buildings for public worship among the early Methodists in America, developed heroic leaders—men of large mental calibre and of imperial character. Their names may not have been heralded at the time; their humility may have intercepted honorable mention of their far-reaching plans as a part of the elect forces then at work, but the results of their patient toil will ever remain as an abiding influence among the people of God.

On the roll of loyal men who took part in the establishment of Methodism in Richmond, we find the name of William Allison.

He was a native of Ireland, but evidently descended from Scotch-English stock, as the family name would indicate. His ancestors bequeathed to him the invaluable legacy of both physical and mental strength,

and when he came from Alexandria to Richmond as the representative of an important commercial enterprise, he at once began to impress both the business and the religious community around him with the trustworthiness of his opinions, and the wonderful individuality of the man in public life.

He was a member of the first "Trinity Church in the Valley," and was a trustee of the new church, which was erected in 1828, near the corner of Fourteenth and Franklin streets.

Loyal and helpful to its membership and its benevolent work, he remained in fellowship with the Trinity congregation until the close of his life. He died in 1850, and was buried from Trinity Church.

We are not dependent upon tradition for information relating to the useful career of this noble man of God.

It was upon the Atlantic ocean, while crossing over to make his future home in America, that the young traveler gave his heart to God. The hardships of the voyage, which included six weeks, were made memorable by peril and privation. The value of life—the danger of losing it—and the duty of consecrating it to God, seemed to have wrought a revolution in his methods of thought, and he sought in prayer the blessed opportunity of dedicating soul and body to the great Saviour of the world. He never regretted that step voluntarily taken away out at sea, with none save God to hear his plea for safety.

In the luggage of young Allison was a little Bible,

which was printed in London, in 1795, and bought by him in the year 1800. It was at the age of eighteen that he left home. Many equally as intrepid and enterprising youths, coming away from the old homestead, would not have thought of the Word of God as an indispensable part of a personal outfit, when the baggage was all ready to be shipped to the deck of the waiting craft in the harbor. That book was to be the pilgrim staff of that young man in his new home away over the briny deep, and he was careful to keep it in easy reach of both hand and heart. He read its tidings of "good news from a far country"; and its lessons of divine truth opened the way to the auspicious place and hour when, at sea, he "found peace in believing," and registered his citizenship in heaven. That Bible became the property of one of his daughters, and her children still treasure it as a priceless legacy—an heirloom in safe-keeping under the roof of a Christian home.

His first resting-place upon the soil of Virginia was, as I have already intimated, the city of Alexandria. From that point he came to Richmond in the year 1814.

To his credit let it be spoken and written, that although his genius for business life led to the largest success, and secured for him an ample fortune, he never permitted secular interests, no matter how valuable and important, to interfere with his religious duties as a servant of God in the Methodist Church. There were local attractions to tempt the young at

that remote day, but his principles were too firmly fixed to be moved, and his will too inflexible to be bent out of harmony with the general tenor of his life.

At one time he was a Justice of the Peace by the will of the people, but political engagements at that early period in the history of the republic did not require the sacrifice of conscience and character to achieve party success. While in office he maintained an even temper of mind, and, when released from the responsibilities of his position, he retired from the post of honor with an untarnished reputation.

His generosity of soul led him to perform many acts of Christian beneficence. The poor always found in him a friend upon whom they could rely in time of trouble. He loved to give. He helped a number of young men to start in business. His brother merchants were frequently indebted to him for financial favors, which enabled them to tide over the embarrassments of a stringent money market. He paid numerous security debts amounting to \$100,000. Overcoming every reverse with a most wonderful recuperative energy, he left a large estate as one of the results of his life-long work.

He loved his church. His house was the home of the Methodist preacher, and the humblest itinerant always found a cordial welcome awaiting him at the front door. He was never so happy as when entertaining the prophets of God, or listening reverently to the message of salvation from their lips in the sanctuary.

He was largely instrumental in the erection of the second Trinity in 1828, and in the restoration of the building in 1837. When the edifice was complete, he kindly donated a bond of \$500, which he held against the trustees of the church, who had borrowed that amount to assist in paying for the construction of the sacred edifice.

He married Miss Ann Waters, a beautiful and cultured Christian woman. To the wedded pair the Lord gave thirteen children, five of whom were living at the time of his death in 1850. His wife survived him, and the casket which contained her mortal remains was the last to be borne from the doorway of "Old Trinity" in the year 1861, shortly before the transfer of the congregation to their new temple of worship, on the corner of Twentieth and Broad streets.

His portrait may be found in the residence of his son, Capt. William H. Allison, on West Franklin street in this city. It represents a manly figure with a broad brow, a firm mouth, and a twinkling eye, radiant with gentleness and good humor. The portrait of his wife reveals a lovely face with a cast of countenance indicative of a charitable soul and a lofty elevation of character. It is not strange that they should have wielded a wide social influence, and impressed their friends and neighbors with respect and reverence for the church of God.

It was Lord Chesterfield who said: "Those who in the common course of the world, will call them-

selves your friends; or whom, according to the common notions of friendship, you may probably think such, will never tell you of your faults. But, on the contrary, more desirous to make you their friend than to prove their friendship for you, they patronize your follies in order to use you." William Allison was not that kind of a friend. He attracted true hearts, and was careful to live so that no one could question his sincerity, or doubt for a moment that his word was pure gold. This is the reason why his business relations with his fellow-merchants never resulted in even a temporary estrangement.

His personal income grew steadily, not by speculation, but by the use of just such sound judgment as that for which Benjamin Franklin contended when he wrote: "The way to wealth is as plain as the way to market. It depends chiefly on two words, industry and frugality; that is, waste neither time nor money, but make the best use of both."

But it was in the development of his religious life that our sainted friend exemplified most conspicuously those traits of character which made him a man worthy of imitation. The even tenor of his unvarying loyalty to his church reminds one of that remarkable declaration of Baxter: "It is one thing to take God and heaven for your portion, as believers do; and another thing to be desirous of it, as a reserve when you can keep the world no longer. It is one thing to submit to heaven as a lesser evil than hell; and another thing to desire it as a greater good than

earth. It is one thing to lay up treasures and hopes in heaven, and seek it first; and another thing to be contented with it in our necessity, and to seek the world before it, and give God only what the flesh can spare.”

A servant of the Lord with such a record as our departed friend and pioneer carried to heaven with him, could never have debated the propriety of self-denial or self-sacrifice after the consecrated ear had heard the call of the Master. His uplifted example ought to be a stimulus and a blessing to the present generation. Would that all the Lord’s people were as willing to spend and be spent for the sake of that Christ whose friendship is our only hope.

V.

RICHARD WHITFIELD.

Richard Whitfield was born in Whitby, Yorkshire, England, September 12, 1777. To a writer in the *Christian Advocate* we are indebted for the following facts concerning his life:

Deprived by death of all his relatives, he attached himself in youth to the merchant marine. The premature discharge of a cannon, while firing a salute, severely and permanently disabling his right hand, he was led to a total change of his pursuits. In 1801 he embarked for America and landed in New York, where he lived for six years. In 1807 he removed to Richmond, and made it his home for the rest of his life.

As a citizen, Mr. Whitfield was unambitious of public honors, though animated by a laudable public spirit. The esteem in which his judgment and integrity were held, is partially evidenced by his service for fifteen years as a justice, to which position he was elected against his wish, and twice reëlected against his protest. As a business man he was sagacious, energetic and indefatigable. His industry and good judgment, and the conspicuous integrity that marked

all his transactions, were rewarded by a handsome property, and together with his general capacity, gave him prominence among the leading citizens of Richmond. He was in all, the architect of his own fortunes, and won his way by solid merit.

Mr. Whitfield was converted to God while living in New York, and under the ministry of Rev. Nicholas Snethen. He at once joined the Methodist Church, of which he remained a communicant till his death. As a member of our church in Richmond he was, throughout his long life, exceedingly useful. He filled all its lay offices with honor. His zeal and liberality abounded in behalf of all the enterprises of the church. His house was ever a preacher's home—a term, the whole virtue and charm of which, none but itinerant preachers, and especially those of the earlier days, can fully appreciate. There are still many of these who hold him in blessed remembrance.

Mr. Whitfield's piety was deep, his life consistent, and his faith firm and intelligent, always ready to give the reasons on which it was founded. His testimony and example were as a candle set upon a candlestick. With advancing years his Christian character gained new development, verifying the words of the wise man, that the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. His attendance at church became less frequent as his infirmities increased, until finally he could come no more. Never can the writer forget the picture of holy rapture on the last or nearly the last of these

occasions, as the venerable Christian, with lifted eyes and beaming countenance united in singing the grand doxology of Bishop Kerr, in which men below and angels above are invoked to join in praising the triune God, the source of all our blessings. It is thus that memory sees him whenever his name is called, in his accustomed place next to the altar of Centenary Church, with features radiant and heart aglow with the near foretaste of the joys of heaven. But he is not there now, save only as the mind pictures him. He is indeed singing the same song as then; but he sings it above.

The last years of Mr. Whitfield's life were spent in what Bunyan describes as the land of Beulah. His Christian warfare was already accomplished, his fight of faith was over, his perils were past, and thenceforth there was laid up for him a crown of righteousness. In beatific prospect of the eternal joys, he was but waiting until his change should come. It had pleased God to grant him the blessing of Abraham—"full of years" and "satisfied with long life"; it only remained to call him to the upper mansions. Finally the summons arrived. To use the figure of Bunyan, a post came from the Celestial City, with a notification to Richard Whitfield, that he would soon be sent for, and the messenger gave a token that his message was true: "The keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the golden bowl shall be broken." These signs Mr. Whitfield bore for a

season. His infirmities increased, but so did his faith and his consolation. His bliss was sometimes ecstatic. At last, on the 4th of August, 1866, the angelic convoy came for him, and he went to his God.

His funeral was preached the next day by Bishop Doggett, to a large congregation in Centenary Church, and his body was committed to the grave in Shocco Cemetery, to await the "first resurrection."

VI.

JAMES M. TAYLOR.

BY WILLIAM G. STARP, D. D.

In the county of New Kent nearly one hundred years ago was born one of the truest friends that Richmond Methodism has ever enrolled upon the list of tireless and successful workers in the vineyard of the Lord. He died at the age of seventy-one, after having served his generation in the fear of God.

James M. Taylor was converted at an early age, and at once gave evidence of his own personal belief that a saved man ought to be thoroughly consecrated to the service of his Saviour. For many years he held his membership with Centenary Church in this city and was always in his seat in the house of God when the time came for public worship. He was an enthusiastic friend of the preacher. On the Sabbath day he listened to the man of God with a glad heart, and during the secular week he held himself in readiness to serve his pastor as promptly as if summoned by the ringing of a bell. He kept his heart full of the love of God by trusting in Christ implicitly, and then by exemplifying that love in deeds of charity and in loyal devotion to the church of his choice.



JAMES M. TAYLOR

He was a man of such positive convictions touching duty to God and his fellow men that nothing could swerve him an inch from what he believed to be the path of the just. It is related that when the work upon the present Centenary Church building was at one time arrested, owing to the apprehension of the builders that they might not be paid in due time for their labor and material, Wm. Evans (the father-in-law of Bro. Taylor), Richard Whitfield and James M. Taylor assumed the payment of the debt, and directed the builders to continue the work without fear until the work was complete. In his judgment, justice leaned toward the obligation of the people binding them to make good their contract with the workmen, but he entertained a loftier sense of justice toward that God whose house might be to many souls the very gate of heaven.

In the year 1845 Brother Taylor saw the need of a new church enterprise in a section of the city adjacent to the intersection of the two streets known as Clay street and Brook avenue. Without waiting until some result might be reached through the frequent sessions of committees he at once purchased a lot and proceeded to erect what was known for many years as "Clay Street Chapel." He nailed the shingles on the roof with his own hands, and paid every dollar of the cost of the entire structure as soon as it was due. When the edifice was finished, it was ready for the immediate use of the little group of worshippers who were gathered there to receive it

without any fear of financial embarrassment—the last item of indebtedness having already been provided for by this noble man of God.

A wise field of usefulness was providentially provided for the peculiar gifts of Brother Taylor in this new sphere of labor. He undertook, as soon as the congregation entered the new building, to organize a Sunday School, and for twenty-five years he was its energetic and faithful superintendent. If the treasury of the church was not in condition to help the school at any time, it mattered not, inasmuch as the money was always at the disposal of God's people through the liberality of this prince in Israel. He loved children, and every member of the chapel school looked to him who presided over its destiny as a father and a friend. They often halted him upon the street to recite in his hearing the simple story of their everyday cares and sorrows, and he was ever ready to cancel their griefs with the sympathy of his great heart.

Bishop McTyiere once said to a body of young ministers in our Conference, "Be courteous and kind to every one, but never forget to cultivate the friendship of the children of the church."

Nestor H. Forbes was the teacher of the male Bible class in that old Clay Street Sunday School. Out of that company of young men God called four to the ministry of the Word. It was always the first question with Brother Taylor, whenever he met any one of the four, to enquire also about the ministerial

success of all the rest of them. He felt that their lives and his own had only been parted asunder down here by the call of duty, and that by God's will they would meet again in heaven.

As a steward and trustee of the church, our hal-
lowed friend was a model of promptness and fidelity. His physical endurance enabled him to accomplish everything he attempted to do in the service of his Lord, but behind this there was a mighty impulse from God—a holy longing to see the work prospering everywhere. He kept back nothing of time, energy or estate which he could possibly carry to the altar as an offering to the Christ who had saved him.

When advancing years reminded him that the end might not be far off he calmly faced the issue with triumphant faith in God. Under the roof of his son, H. Seldon Taylor, now an honored steward of Park Place Church, this venerable man of God breathed his last in full hope of the glorious resurrection of the just.

His memory will linger through long years to come, carefully treasured in the hearts of those who knew him well and loved him with filial devotion. His best memorial has already been written and re-written in the lines of those whose thoughts were moulded by his broad views of Christian liberality, and the missionary spirit which filled his soul will be a living power among Richmond Methodists so long as the Angel of the Covenant shall lead us to newer fields of toil and make us brave to meet the largest claims of Christian work.

Several years ago Bishop Atticus G. Haygood said in a letter to a church paper: "Let us never fail to cherish and care for our old men so long as they live, and then our love for them will prompt us to take care of their memory when they are gone." The deeds of our fathers are a sacred trust committed to coming generations by the providence of God, and we ought to meet the obligation during our brief day on earth by a systematic preservation of their inspiring words and heroic achievements. Centuries ago Tacitus wrote, "This I hold to be the chief office of history, to rescue virtuous actions from the oblivion to which a want of records would consign them;" and we cannot conscientiously let perish from the annals of Methodism in Virginia any item of information that may be of service to those who will come after us.

The grand old men, who left shining footprints behind them when they were transferred to the heavenly home still live in the affections of every grateful servant of the Lord Jesus, and they deserve to be honored by all who love the church of God.

VII.

CHARLES TALBOTT.

Charles Talbott was born September 15, 1813, in Anne Arundel county, Maryland, at the ancestral home of his father, John Lawrence Talbott. In 1839 he came to Richmond, and in 1848 he became a member of old Trinity Church under the ministry of the Rev. John E. Edwards. He was one of the leaders in the movement to build new Trinity on the corner of Twentieth and Franklin streets. He believed that a church was needed in that locality and he showed his faith not only by his liberality, being one of the largest contributors to the enterprise, but by the unceasing care which he gave to it.

He was a born architect and the plans of the new church were largely the result of his thought. The erection of the building absorbed him so completely that he could be usually found there when he was sought in his home. He saw every brick and stone go into it. The beauty and comfort of the Sunday School room, which has often been remarked upon, is largely the result of his planning and untiring efforts.

For many years he gave to Trinity bountifully of

his thought, his heart and his means. His beneficence was characteristic of the man. It was his joy to give without ostentation. He had the grace of hospitality. His home was the preacher's home, and there was nothing too good and no service too great for him to render the itinerant who came under his roof.

As a man of business he was conspicuous for integrity. He illustrated the truth that a man may prosper in the pursuit of any honorable avocation if honesty be with him a matter of principle rather than of policy.

As a citizen he desired nothing save the approbation of God and the good opinion of his fellow men. More than once he declined to receive municipal honors, which his many friends would gladly have conferred upon him.

He died December 16, 1881, after a career of great usefulness in the various relations of life, and his name lives in the grateful memory of all who knew him.

VIII.

CORNELIUS CREW

Cornelius Crew, for many years one of the most influential Methodists in Richmond, was born in Charles City County, January 22, 1805. His parents were Quakers, and to their faith and worship he adhered till he reached the full maturity of his years. After his marriage in 1831 he began more frequently to attend religious worship at old Trinity Methodist Church, and in 1841, under the ministry of the Rev. John Newland Maffitt, he made a profession of experimental conversion and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Within one year from the time of his union with the church—we quote from a sketch written by the late Dr. John E. Edwards—he was appointed leader, and not long thereafter a steward, both of which offices he filled with great usefulness and fidelity as long as his health would allow him to attend to his duties. He took a lively interest in all the institutions and enterprises of the church, and was a liberal contributor to all its plans for church extension, and for the furtherance of the gospel in the world.

After the division of old Trinity Church membership he united with that portion which concluded to build what is now known as new Trinity. Brother Crew took an active and leading part in the erection of this church edifice. He gave his time and attention to the work and contributed his money with an unstinted hand.

He was the friend and patron of education and educational enterprises. More than once he took an active part—in efforts that proved unsuccessful—in getting up a large female college in Richmond, to be directly under the direction of the church of his choice. The Sunday School engaged his attention and labors, and shared largely in his contributions from the time he entered the church until he was unable to walk to the Sunday School room. He spoke of it frequently during his last illness, and seemed to desire, more than almost anything else, a return to his accustomed place and duties in this work of benevolence and charity.

He was a sincere and conscientious Christian. He often complained of his want of that measure of religious enjoyment which he thought others experienced; but he was constant in prayer, uniform in his attendance on the church services, and always led an irreproachable Christian life.

But it remained for his last illness to bring up his religious experience to its climax of enjoyment. His deep and earnest piety exhibited itself in its beauty and power as his strength declined, and as he verged

to the close of his life. He acquired a complete victory over death, and looked forward to it and spoke of it with all the composure with which the toil-worn laborer looks to the close of the day, or the weary mariner, after a tedious voyage, looks to the port of his destination.

His humility was a most conspicuous trait in his character. He shrank with an instinctive recoil from anything like praise that might be bestowed upon him, and strictly enjoined time and again, that nothing should be said or written about him that might not tend to glorify the grace of God. He wished to sink into nothing and let Christ be all in all. When his pastor would say, "We shall miss you; what will the church do without you?" he would reply: "God can do without me; he is not dependent upon such a poor worm as I am for the support of his cause."

He died January 22, 1865, at his home in this city. The day before his death, when his strength was rapidly failing, he requested his pastor, with his family, to sing his favorite hymn—"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord"—and at the close of the hymn, at his request, prayer was offered up; and as the party rose from their knees, he repeated: "Blessed Jesus, dear Redeemer—how precious is Christ."

Never was there a softer, gentler falling asleep in Jesus than was witnessed in his death.

IX.

DAVID S. DOGGETT AND THOMAS BRANCH.

BY PAUL WHITEHEAD, D. D.

The subject assigned to me connects the names of two men of mark, widely different in personal characteristics, in the spheres of life and activity providentially falling to them, and in the species of influence exerted by them upon mankind and the church of God.

The one was a distinguished preacher of the gospel, and at length a bishop of his church; the other a layman, a merchant and banker. The one was a student and scholar, a man of letters, prominent in style and utterance; the other spending little time upon books; having no leisure for study; blunt, direct and positive in his address. The one spending much of his time in seclusion from society, in lonely study and meditation in the pastor's retirement, "far from a world of grief and sin," temporarily, if not "forevermore with God shut in;" the other in marts of trade and traffic, in strugglings, battlings and endeavorings, oftentimes in boisterous conflicts, where man's selfish interests and schemes to get gain, clash

and collide and strike fire; where a man must think quickly and decide important questions upon a moment's consideration; where he needs much prayer and looking to God to do right and yet must "pray on the wing" and take hold upon God by the "upward glancing of an eye," through the smoke of the battle of trade; where above all every provocation to anger, bitterness and distrust of our fellow men, arises from the numerous examples, constantly before one's eyes, of the unworthiness of ordinary human nature.

The one called to prominence and office and authority in the church by the force of his reputation and the splendor of his gifts improved by grace; the other moved by the sense of duty and the earnest desire of his heart to better things around him, to come to the front of service and without fee or reward of money or fame, serve his generation and lay upon the altar of the Divine glory his abilities and contributions.

Both touched deeply and strongly, the life current of Richmond Methodism, as at another place, they had touched for good and eternal help, each other's souls.

The period of life in Richmond common to both, was comparatively short, extending from 1865 to 1880. The labors and influence of Bishop Doggett in the community, began, however, long before the earlier of these dates; and Mr. Branch in age and feebleness continued on the stage of life here for

eight years after the bishop's mortal part slept under his monument in Hollywood.

David S. Doggett was stationed in Richmond four times; namely, at Trinity in 1834 (the year of his marriage); in 1850-1 and 1852-3 at Centenary; in 1861-2 and 1862-3 at Broad Street; and finally in 1863-4, 1864-5 and 1865-6 at Centenary, being elected Bishop in April of the last year. He also served as presiding elder of the Richmond District for four years—from 1857 to 1861. He had bought real estate and gradually enlarged his property in the capital city of the commonwealth, and naturally selected it as his home when he was elected Bishop. He had therefore long known it and become in a general way well acquainted with its Methodist population and membership before Thomas Branch's removal from Petersburg.

The range of his intimate friends was not large; he did not seek company and had often an abstracted manner in which he was comparatively silent and took little part in conversation; hence his influence was very largely that of a public man; in the pulpit, in public meeting, or in the small groups of trustees, managers or directors of some interdenominational body like the Virginia Bible Society, of which he was some time president. He was known to, and more or less well acquainted with, the leading preachers of other churches in his day; for example, Drs. Plumer and Hoge of the Presbyterians, Dr. Jeter of the Baptists, Dr. Minnegerode of the Episco-

pallians; and had often preached in churches of other denominations.

In the judgment of most men capable of giving an opinion, he was *facile princeps* of the Richmond pulpit whenever he had a charge in the city. No man I have ever heard could preach a hundred consecutive sermons of a higher order of merit, or make a deeper or more abiding impression on the minds and hearts of his hearers. He was too classic and elegant for the taste of some men; too elaborate and thoughtful for others; not noisy enough and too regardful of proprieties for a few; but the average man, while listening to him, had broader views of Scripture, deeper views of religious life, thrilled with higher resolves to be a whole hearted and more devoted disciple of the Lord Jesus, and oftentimes was swept off his feet by the rush of a heaven-endowed eloquence that carried the listener to supernal heights of enjoyment or enthusiastic readiness to do and dare all things for Christ's sake.

It cannot be doubted that in addition to the direct and immediate good done to individual souls by such a preacher, one great service rendered to Methodism, here as elsewhere, was to take away much of its reproach, in the eyes of men at large, as a church with an ignorant, uncultivated or inelegant ministry. *David S. Doggett was the peer of any body's minister.* There was no discount on his scholarship. He was as polished as Addison, as faultless in diction as Macaulay. His religious fervor was as exalted as that

of Doddridge, and his theology as clear and well adjusted as John Wesley's. His illustrations gave signs of wide reading and a pure taste. He never even leaned towards coarseness, levity or irreverence.

He was a splendid example of the successful extempore speaker. I heard him in Norfolk in 1851 deliver an elaborate and powerful discourse on the text "It is finished." I wrote from memory a full outline of it, but of necessity a mere outline, for I was not a stenographer or even a practised note-taker. Years afterwards I showed him the sketch. He read it with interest and exclaimed, "You have more of it than I have!" I did not ask an explanation, but I thought that he had somehow lost the full manuscript; I strove in vain to understand him as meaning literally what he said. Yet after his death, I inspected his manuscripts in the possession of Dr. John E. Edwards, and I saw that his remark was precisely true! He carried in his mind, with some marvelous power to reproduce it, the filling out of the great sermons of which he had never, for the most part, constructed formally in writing anything but the frame-work.

In delivery he was perfectly natural, without a trace of affectation or artificiality. He was a preacher and not an actor; absorbed in his subject, not in elocutionary effects, yet violating no canon of true art. When, immediately after admission into the Conference, I asked him what advice he would give to a beginner in preaching, he replied, "Study to

be natural, and try to find out and correct your faults:" a simple and exhaustive direction, though difficult of execution. He was a great preacher made on that model.

Though a man of ability in the use of the pen, and, when aroused, not devoid of power as a debater, and also an intelligent student of our church polity, Bishop Doggett was not a leader in ecclesiastical circles like Dr. William A. Smith or Dr. Leroy M. Lee, or Bishop John Early. The superior of any of them on the throne of his power, the pulpit, they excelled him in dealing with "State affairs" in the Church, and in governing and controlling men or bodies of men for governmental purposes. His "days" then bear his impress chiefly as an able minister of the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ the Saviour, "rightly dividing the word of truth." The day of Eternity alone will reveal fully his share in this respect, in the coloring and shaping of Methodist life and Methodist development here, where so large a portion of his mature life and ministry was spent.

Since he "fell asleep" in 1880 there has risen among us no such man: the splendor of no such light has blazed along the track upon which the car of Methodism in this city has been rolling.

He was great in death. Among other things notable, his reply to the hope expressed by a brother minister that he would soon be better and recover from his attack, is worthy of remembrance. "No,

no," said he, "I have gone too far now, I wish to step out on the shores of Eternity, clad in the robes of my immortality." After much patient endurance of suffering, and a clear, powerful witness throughout, to the saving efficacy of the grace and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, he breathed his life out peacefully upon the breast of his Redeemer—the refuge to which he had pointed and led many a troubled, sin-sick soul.

THOMAS BRANCH was getting to be an old man when, in 1865, he came to Richmond to reside. About the last fourth of his life was spent here. He had been for over thirty years a prominent Methodist in Petersburg—second there only to D'Arcy Paul, the incomparable Irishman, whose exalted piety, unbounded liberality and unselfish personal services to the church and Conference, have made his name "as ointment poured forth." The "Cockade City" has always been a strong hold of Methodism. It had many noble Christians in our churches. Next to D'Arcy Paul, as I have said, was Thomas Branch, converted in Dinwiddie County, and joining the church in Petersburg when David S. Doggett was our pastor there. When High Street Church was organized, he went thither and gave some of the best years of his life to the service of God in that section of our Petersburg membership. After years of companionship with D'Arcy Paul and other men of a high type, he joined the ranks of Richmond Methodists as they rallied their thin lines for reorganization

and fresh movement after the terrible convulsion of the Civil War.

Thenceforward till his death his unique figure and personality were to be reckoned upon in all our denominational demonstrations. At Annual and General Conferences and especially in rallies or special meetings, at home, he was seen and heard and always made an impression.

His influence over the people of his day, and his power for good are to be ascribed, under God, as I conceive, to three things:—

I. His true and unfeigned personal religion. He was a genuinely converted man, born again in those camp meeting days of 1831, when with the men of the world it was little short of disgrace to go to a Methodist “mourner’s bench” and “seek religion.” He trampled under foot pride and the world, and came down into the dust, and was really and wonderfully changed from nature to grace. And this “pearl of great price” he retained amidst all the corruptions and temptations which assailed him in a long and varied life. We may never know with what difficulty he “kept the faith.” He was unquestionably the subject of painful struggles, and had fears and dark hours; but by the power of the Holy Spirit, with a free use of the ministry of sorrow and bereavement (for he passed through some deep waters), he was kept through faith unto salvation.

Men whose personal religion is doubtful, or more than doubtful, may have influence proceeding from

wealth, or great intellect, or social connections; but people do not hearken to them in matters of religion, nor can they take the flag of the Cross and stand in the front of battle in an evil day. Thomas Branch could. He was devout; he loved worship and the Bible at home and in Church. He loved the company of good men, and chose such for his special intimates. He kept himself unspotted from corrupt and doubtful associations.

2. His decided love of Methodism, its doctrines and its polity. This was true on the whole. He had hesitated for a while about joining the Methodists. The influence of a distinguished and very able minister of another communion kept his mind for some time undecided. But he made his choice and did not substantially swerve from it. He was attracted, especially late in life, by the idea of church unity which has engaged the thoughts and interested the hearts of many devout and broad-minded men. He was greatly enamored of the idea that there could be a great church which all good men might join, and love and labor for Christ's cause without so many sects of varying opinions. But while he supposed himself to be very liberal in the concessions which he could make to this great idea, it was interesting to note how Methodistic was the origin and source of what he counted indispensable. In truth the Methodism in him had given him the catholicity which sought yet broader paths in which to walk. A true Methodist is ready always to say to all others,

“If thy heart be right, as my heart is with thy heart, give me thy hand.” Like John Wesley he values good living above even right opinions. He strikes hands with good people on all sides. The Methodist people, with good reason, counted Thomas Branch to be among them, not by accident but by deliberate and earnest choice—a choice tested by the events of over fifty years, in an exciting, laborious and eventful life.

3. His liberality. Few men have been more generous and free-hearted in their gifts of private kindness and charity and of public benevolence. He had a tender, sympathetic, affectionate disposition, strangely mingled with an abrupt manner which sometimes appeared harsh. Touch his heart and you could lead him any whither except to do wrong. The church and community soon took his gauge. They knew that he would give, and that he was not of those men who are always studying how to avoid doing what conscience and public opinion demand of them. And so the blessing of his example was large in his day, and remains in Richmond Methodism yet. His will of record in the Court of this city, contained the largest bequest to our church work of any man of our generation.

A rich Methodist, not compromising and refining away the doctrines of religion taught by the fathers of the church; not ashamed of its polity and usages; of pure living and unfeigned devoutness and spirituality of mind; charitable, liberal, benevolent, not

close or narrow in the use of money, particularly for the cause of religion, but free handed, ready to relieve distress, setting an example of broad-minded and broad-hearted giving, turning no good cause or worthy object away empty—deserves to be held in everlasting remembrance.

Such I believe was Thomas Branch. In a very advanced age, he gradually declined until death “sealed” God’s “endless mercies” to him and made “the sacrifice complete.”

I will not conclude this paper without making some remarks on the value to our church of a well preserved balance between the two elements, clerical and lay. These two elements are strongly typified by Bishop Doggett and Mr. Branch.

It was a defect, if not an error, in the original development of Methodism, that in its government the clerical element so largely predominated. The laymen were confined to a subordinate sphere as stewards and class-leaders. They did not participate at all in church legislation. Men like Thomas Branch must always have chafed under this state of things. They felt competent to make laws for the church as well as for the State. They saw some things more clearly than the clergy seemed to do. They saw no reason why a preacher’s parchment of ordination should make a man wiser in matters of finance than experience as a merchant or banker, nor why the same preparation should enable one to deal with questions of jurisprudence like a lawyer. Their zeal



The Branch

languished for lack of exercise. Their powers of service were, in many things, dwarfed so far as the Church organization was concerned. Gradually this evil was removed, and no one enjoyed its removal more than Thomas Branch.

A few preachers have talent and special gifts for Church business. Let such be recognized and honored and employed in that sphere as well as in the clerical work proper. On the other hand, not every layman can be decidedly useful in those departments of work which belong to the list of serving tables. They are particularly called to give themselves to "prayer" as much as any preacher is to the "ministry of the world." It is as great a blunder to set them over the temporalities of the Church because they are "good men," "filled with the Holy Spirit" as it would be to employ in the same work an eloquent preacher for that reason. This is an age calling for the best methods and the best men to use them. The clerical ranks ought to be weeded of unworthy incumbents, and the lay officials selected from our most gifted as well as our most consecrated men. Then the worship and the service of God, in the desk and in the pew, in the study and in the council chamber, shall be alike strong and effective, and not too sadly like "the legs of the lame."

With a better educated, better drilled, higher-toned ministry, and the pressing into service of every layman of ability and gifts for every species of work he is prepared to do, we shall need only a powerful

and constant baptism of the Holy Spirit to make the twentieth century as notable in our annals as the eighteenth century, the earlier part of which saw the birth of Methodism in the world, and its latter days, the introduction of the same heaven-blessed organization into the capital city of the Old Dominion.

X.

ASA SNYDER.*

He was born in Ulster county, N. Y., March 30, 1825. His parents, devout and zealous Methodists, brought him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. In 1846 he was married to Miss Blandina Storry, of the same county, who proved herself a faithful, devoted helpmeet through his life, and now sorrows at his grave, yet not as others who have no hope. In 1851 he moved to Richmond, Va., where he was engaged in active business, until declining health compelled him to retire to Unter Walden, his country-seat in Fluvanna. From a child he led a moral life, but not until 1856 did he profess saving faith in Christ. October 5th of that year, he united with Centenary M. E. Church, South, Dr. J. E. Edwards being the pastor. In a brief interview with him last spring, I spoke of the appreciation and affection of his brethren of Centenary to him; his eyes filled with grateful tears, and he acknowledged

* This sketch is taken from an article by Bishop J. C. Granbery, which appeared in the "Richmond Christian Advocate" shortly after Mr. Snyder's death.

with warmth and pathos the uniform kindness and, as he said, forbearance and undeserved honor they had shown him. He was an ornament of grace and pillar of strength to that church.

I do not know the number of years he was superintendent of the Sunday School. But I do know that he was a model superintendent in fidelity and zeal, in wisdom and energy. His heart was in the work; he gave to it his life. It was his thought day and night. It occupied him seven days of the week. He studied the Bible lessons, and illustrated and enforced them with singular beauty and force by blackboard and speech. He had the confidence and love of teachers and scholars and they were plastic in his hands. He was full of enterprise, and knew how to carry his plans into successful operation by a happy combination of tact and tenacity. He met and overcame opposition with a smile on his face, and words of courtesy and gentleness on his lips, but with strength and firmness of conviction and purpose. He won over to his way of thinking those who at first withstood the improvements he advocated, and soon kindled in their hearts his own enthusiasm. He could stir up the negligent to diligence without offending them. He got a great deal of labor and money out of the officers and teachers, ever setting them the example. Indeed, he kept the Sunday School prominently before the entire Church, and enlisted hearty coöperation.

His influence was not confined to Centenary Sun-

day School. His inaugurated the Sunday School Society of Richmond and Manchester, whose monthly meetings still fill to overflow our largest churches. His large heart took in all our stations and circuits, and he was felt as a wholesome stimulus and power in many places.

Sympathy with the poor was a marked feature of his character. It manifested itself in the unbounded energy and liberality with which he enlarged and supported the Dorcas department of his Sunday School. But this was only one of its many generous forms. As his pastor I happened to learn something of his generous feeling to the needy and of his active help. He was not merely beneficent in gifts; he searched them out, examined into their cases, listened patiently and with interest to their story, gave them immediate relief, and labored to secure for them permanent means of living. He might have used the words of Job: "The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy."

When I became preacher in charge of Centenary, I expected to find Brother Snyder an enthusiast in the Sabbath School, but with little time for other kinds of church work. But there was no man in that large and noble society who gave me readier sympathy, wiser counsel, or more active support in all my labors, than he. He was an attentive and efficient steward. He was present at the weekly lecture and prayer-meeting. I could count on him

in all revival meetings. If I consulted him about a weak or erring brother, he entered with deep and tender solicitude into the case. Communion with him on personal religion and the kingdom of our Lord was ever refreshing.

His home was a blessed spot. There he delighted to seek rest and solace after the toils and cares of the day. There his sunshiny cheerfulness and love showed forth to greatest advantage. There was no more devoted husband, no fonder father, than he. He neglected nothing which could promote the refined, intelligent, virtuous, and pious happiness of the household. There, too, he dispensed the most genial hospitality.

I have praised him as a Methodist. But he was no bigot. True to his own church, he admired all who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and gladly bade them godspeed, and became their co-worker. He was known and honored beyond Methodism. When his health prevented him from attending night service at his own church, he spent his Sunday afternoons at the Penitentiary Sunday School, and was enthusiastic in the cause. In 1880 he was appointed a delegate to the Raikes' Sunday School Convention in London, and his parting address to the convicts on the Sunday before going abroad was most touching; tears streamed down the hardened faces, and they crowded around him, eager to clasp his hand, and receive his autograph and farewell blessing.

On that trip he contracted asthma, which terminated in pulmonary disease. Compelled to resign the superintendency of Centenary Sunday School he continued his prompt attendance, and his interest was unabated, teaching whenever strength permitted. For three years he enjoyed the sweet seclusion and pure atmosphere of his Fluvanna home. In daily supervision of the farm, he enjoyed communion with nature and nature's God, admiring all vegetable and animal life, wild flower and geological specimen, insect, bird and beast. The last time he spoke in public was in October, 1883, at Wesley chapel, where he was requested to address the congregation in the absence of the pastor. As he expounded the first part of the Lord's Prayer his whole being seemed aglow with heavenly fire, and the people were thrilled and feasted. After a violent cold contracted in March, 1884, he never spoke in his natural voice, but always in a faint whisper. His wife and one son were his constant attendants, and in the following June his entire family gathered around him. His appetite and strength improved, awaking delusive hope. July 18th he was thrown from his buggy, and, though he suffered only bruises, from that time he sank rapidly. Speechless from the shock for many minutes, his lips were afterwards seen to move, a look of holy triumph and praise was on his face, and his daughter, bending, caught the whisper, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!" Tender of others' com-

fort, thankful for every service rendered, placid and lovely he faded away. He kept his Bible by his side, and to the last day of his life never neglected private prayer. The family altar was not slighted even in his extreme feebleness: the last evening, as usual, one of the children read a chapter in the Bible, they all knelt in silent prayer, then the Lord's Prayer was uttered, his faint voice leading, and he closed with his wonted petition, "O Lord take not thy Holy Spirit from us," the last words the family heard him speak. Thus he lingered at the very gate of the Celestial City, until the night of August 4th, when it opened, and he entered within. He had given minute instructions about the management of the farm, and his modest "dying request" that his family should not wear mourning nor erect over him a monument, concluding with this emphatic testimony: "And my dear child! remember that my hope is in the Lord Jesus Christ."

XI.

ALBERT L. WEST.*

Albert L. West was born in Chesterfield county, Va., on the 10th of May, 1825, and died at his home, in the city of Richmond, on the 27th of September, 1892.

With the exception of a few years spent in Petersburg and in Augusta, Ga.—in the latter city in the service of the Confederate Government—he had lived in Richmond from his early manhood. He was closely identified with the interests of the city, and, as a public-spirited citizen, took a lively interest in all enterprises looking to its prosperity. He was an architect by profession; and many edifices, public and private, here and elsewhere, stand as monuments to his skill and fidelity.

For more than half a century he was a member of the Methodist Church. As such he was consistent, faithful, devoted. He was seldom absent from his place in the sanctuary; and by prayer and song and exhortation was always glad to contribute to the

* A sketch by the late Dr. R. N. Sledd, published in the "Richmond Christian Advocate."

interest of the social service. He was ready for every good word and work.

He was a diligent, earnest student of the Word of God. Many years ago he wrote in his diary: "I have finished reading the Bible through the eighth time. I propose hereafter to read it not consecutively, but by books or subjects." He read it with commentary and concordance at hand for the explanation of difficult passages and for comparing things spiritual with spiritual. He read it not as an intellectual pastime, but for the spiritual light and guidance, strength and comfort which he found in it. It was good for his soul. He grew thereby

He was specially active in the Sunday School work. As teacher, superintendent, and for many years president of the Sunday School Association of Richmond and Manchester, he rendered faithful and efficient service. At the time of his death he was chairman of the Executive Committee of the State Sunday School Union. Few men have labored more earnestly in this department of church enterprise than he; none ever rejoiced more in its success.

The mission work of the Church enlisted his deepest sympathies and active coöperation. For many years he was in constant correspondence with one or more of our missionaries in foreign fields, kept fully abreast with their movements, and did what he could for their temporal welfare. "Uncle Larry" had in him a strong friend and ally. The Rosebuds are familiar with his name, and are indebted to him

in no small measure for the stability and enlargement of their work.

It was through his efforts in connection with those of one other gentleman that the Young Men's Christian Association, of Richmond, was organized and put into successful operation. There was no movement having in view the moral and religious welfare of the community that did not enlist his sympathy and help.

He was of broad, catholic spirit—thoroughly Methodistic in principle and preference, but a stranger to intolerance and bigotry. The presence at his funeral of about twenty ministers and a great audience of all denominations was a splendid testimony to his Christian catholicity.

His home-life was simple and beautiful. As husband and father, he was tender and true, finding his own happiness in the happiness of those he loved. To them his memory is precious.

A kind neighbor, an unfaltering friend, an upright citizen, a devoted follower of Christ, he rests from his labors, and his works do follow him. In beautiful Hollywood he waits the trumpet call of the resurrection morn.

XII.

WILLIAM HOLT RICHARDSON.

William Holt Richardson was for many years a member of Trinity Church, but in 1859 he resolved to unite with the little group of worshippers who followed the movement and plan of the Rev. Dr. James A. Duncan to erect a church building upon the corner of Broad and Tenth streets. He became, then, one of the founders of the present Broad Street Church. In the new organization he was a trustee, and a member of the Official Board until the close of his life. His pastor loved him and committed to his hands much of that class of church work which requires for its successful transaction a clear mind and extraordinary soundness of judgment.

He was born in 1817 and died June 16, 1883—in the very prime of his Christian manhood, having attained his sixty-sixth year. During the period of his long residence in Richmond he bore a spotless reputation and was looked upon as a model man in all his business relations with his fellow-men. Never did the Methodist banner trail in the dust when William Holt Richardson had the flag staff. Out of a

Methodist home and surrounded by a family of Methodist children, he passed to his heavenly reward.

Amiable, charitable, just, heroic in affliction, gentle as a child, meek and unoffending, diligent in every duty, he was a man who lovingly but unobtrusively walked near his Maker, modestly shrinking as it were from His presence as well as from the observation of men, and seeking to avoid giving offense by any exhibition of self-righteousness. Like the incense of a sweet flower, his was a pure and lovely character to be envied by those who seek the higher life. Few Methodists dispensed more genuine hospitality than he. He appeared to be unconscious of his many acts of charity, absolutely so forgetting them that they never restrained the freedom of those who took part with him in any benevolent enterprise.

He completed a life of great usefulness on earth and left behind him the legacy of a good name.

XIII.

T L. D. WALFORD.

Thomas Logan Douglas Walford was born in this city, September 25, 1829. His parents died when he was very young and he grew up under the care of his sisters—noble Christian women, who continued to train him as his parents had begun, for a life of Christian usefulness. His father was for many years a highly respected school-teacher in Richmond. In early life he was employed by the Methodist Book Concern, which was then located in this city. Here he imbibed a love for good books, which gave direction to his subsequent career.

The greater part of his life was spent in the book business. In his latter days he was the agent of the Virginia Bible Society, a position he retained until his death. He was all his life a devoted Methodist. He believed with all his heart in the doctrines of his church, loved her institutions and was loyal to all her demands of duty.

He took deep interest in all the public affairs of the Church. He was often a delegate to the District and Annual Conferences and was one of the most

influential members of the Sunday School Association and also of the Layman's Union. His church elected him to many positions of honor and trust. The position which he most appreciated and in which he found his greatest pleasure was that of infant-class teacher in Trinity Sunday School. He had a talent for imparting to children the truths of the Bible. He believed that the Bible was for childhood as well as old age, and he seldom failed to make it interesting to all the little ones under his care. He taught this class for more than twenty-five years and many hundreds remember him with affection as their first Sunday School teacher. To a casual observer he seemed at times a stern disciplinarian, but the children always loved him and were reluctant to leave his room for the higher classes.

His health, never very robust, gave way when he was in his sixty-eighth year, and on January 27, 1896, his spirit was released and he went home to be with loved ones who had long passed before him into a better world.

He was an affable and courteous gentleman, a fervent Christian, of blameless life and faithful to every duty. No man labored more earnestly or more efficiently for Richmond Methodism in his day than he.

XIV

ELECT LADIES.

Elsewhere in this volume mention has been made of the singular scarcity of records relating to the deeds of the heroic men who helped to make Methodism what it is in Richmond. If our fathers showed little concern for the perpetuation of the memory of their deeds, it is not strange that our mothers should have left no record whatever from which one might get even a hint of their labors. Yet there is abundant evidence that no women ever gave themselves more fully to the church than they. The impress of woman's hand is to be found upon every part of Richmond Methodism, and while the very names of many of the elect ladies of the heroic age of the church have been forgotten the influence of their lives still abides with us.

We are indebted to Bishop Asbury for the preservation of the name of the first woman who took a leading part in the development of Richmond Methodism. Among the immigrants who came to Richmond after the Revolution was a Mr. Parrott, a highly respectable Englishman of moderate means.

His wife and daughters were zealous Wesleyans, and while he was not a member of the church he had a warm place in his heart for the Methodist itinerant, and was proud to call his house the preacher's home. The family lived on Main street near the old market, and for many years their home was the regular stopping place of our preachers. Bishop Asbury was several times their guest and in his journal he refers in considerate terms to the gracious hospitality for which they were noted. Mrs. Parrott seems to have been the leading spirit in the little Methodist society which was formed in Richmond in 1793, and which after a severe struggle secured a foothold by erecting a church in 1799. It was during this period of struggle that she provided at her own expense a shelter for the society, as related by Dr. Brown in his paper on "Methodism In Richmond For One Hundred Years."

A second name on the brief list of heroic women that has come down to us is Miss Mary (familiarily known as Miss Polly) Bowles. Miss Bowles was one of the most remarkable women of her day. It has been frequently stated by persons little acquainted with the history of this city that the early Methodists of Richmond were wholly without influence. As a matter of fact there was never a time when the Church was without leaders of high repute and of commanding influence in the community. The leading spirit of Richmond in the early part of this century was "Miss Polly." Much as she did for

Methodism she did more for the community at large. For many years she taught a school on Nineteenth street which was the intellectual center of the community. At this school the best people of the city received their early training. She was a woman of strong intellect, noble character, and "taught as one having authority." Her indefatigable energy and her zeal for the Lord filled her life with labors up to the very moment of her departure. She ceased to work only when she ceased to live. When Dr. Leroy M. Lee announced his text at her funeral, he paused a moment and then said: "We have met to-day to bury a saint of God. If you go to her home looking for treasure you will find none: she took what she had with her."

Intimately associated with Miss Bowles in her latter days was Mrs. Frances Eger. Mrs. Eger was born in Athlone, Ireland, in 1796, and came to this country when about twenty-one years of age. After a residence of several years in Philadelphia she moved to Richmond. She was for many years one of the most useful and influential members of Old Trinity. As a Sunday School teacher she had few equals.

A little farther down the list is the name of Mrs. Catharine Bethel, who is said to have been the leading spirit of the Methodist circle in the western part of the city in the middle of the century. Mrs. Bethel was a Miss Hardy of Lunenburg. She was a woman of means and of remarkable business ability, and at one time owned the section of the city now covered

by Monroe Park and the surrounding blocks. It was in her house that Albert West organized a Sunday School out of which grew Sidney Chapel. To this enterprise she gave liberally, the lot on which the chapel was built being donated by her. Her house, which was on Main street near what is now Monroe Park, was for many years the preacher's home in that part of the city.

To the same period belongs Mrs. Elizabeth H. Williams who occupied a position in the East End somewhat similar to that occupied by Mrs. Bethel in the West End. She was born February 19, 1802, and was married to Mr. Wilson Williams February 15, 1828, by the Rev. Joseph Carson. She was a sister of John D. Collins, one of the editors of the "Richmond Enquirer." She was converted at Old Trinity on Nineteenth street and for more than sixty years adorned the doctrine of God. It is said that she was never known to miss a service of any kind at her church except when kept away by sickness. She died November 10, 1891, at the age of eighty-nine years.

Coming down to the generation that is just passing away we are attracted by a name of remarkable fragrance. Mrs. Lizzie Morton was at once the ornament and servant of her church. No life was ever richer in good works, none shed a sweeter influence, none was more radiant with the beauty of holiness. She came of a family that never owned a trumpet and she passed through the world

so quietly that few besides those who felt the touch of her helping hand were aware of her presence. But these were a multitude. She was a veritable magnet for people in trouble. The needy, the perplexed, the broken-hearted sought her instinctively and never sought her in vain. She came as near the ideal of utter self-abnegation as mortals ever get in this world. Her whole strength was consumed in the service of Christ and those for whom Christ died.

Mrs. Morton was born September 15, 1834, and went home July 9, 1897. Between these dates was crowded such a wealth of love's labor as has seldom found place in a single life. Her work in Centenary Church will abide forever. In spite of her retiring disposition and horror of publicity she was pressed into all the leading positions open to women in the church, and she adorned them all. The beautiful pulpit in Centenary erected to her memory by the Ladies' Aid Society, of which she was long the head, faintly testifies to the regard in which she was held by her co-workers.

Dr. Paul Whitehead, in an appreciative sketch of Mrs. Morton published in the *Richmond Christian Advocate*, says: "We have never known a woman whose ideal of Christian character and work was higher; whose perfection in Christ appeared to be more complete in all humility, simplicity, and devout elevation of soul. Through an extraordinary experience of bereavements and afflictions, hers was a

spirit like gold tried in the fire, to be found unto honor and glory and blessing at the appearance of Jesus Christ.

“While yet able to go in and out among the people, whose sorrow that she knew and had access to was not cheered and brightened? Whose want was not relieved according to her ability? Whose need was not supplied and darkness dispersed by the blessing she drew from the throne of Grace by her power to prevail with God? Her unobtrusive kindnesses were so many; her systematic charities and attentions to organized effort, its stimulation and development, its practical efficiency, were so constant, that one could but be surprised that she found time for these things from a busy home life, where all waited on her touch and her words.

“Her life has been a benediction; her example has been glorious and helpful, her testimony to the power of Jesus, his love, and his fulness, has been clear and constant; her death was peace, and her memory is blessed.”

CENTENNIAL ADDRESSES.



WILLIAM WILLIS.

I.

THE INFLUENCE OF METHODISM IN THE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC.

BY WILLIAM G. STARR, D. D.

It is there—like the veining of a mountain with threads of gold. It is there—like God's sunlight interwoven with every leaf and twig and branch upon that Tree of Life which overshadows our native land.

Not as a political factor, but as a moral force it has shaped in part the governmental fabric around us to-day. It did not seek to control the State by the shrewd management of the ecclesiastical diplomatist. It took God's Word in hand, and gave it to the people, and in this way sought to lift citizenship to the high standard of that divine idea which is embodied in the truth that "righteousness exalteth a nation."

Some years ago we were startled by a discovery of the footprints of giants in the sandstone of Central Nevada. Huge tracks were found forty feet down in a prison quarry, and thinking men were puzzled to know who passed that way thousands of years ago.

But, without the help of a revelation to startle anybody, I can tell you of footprints on this globe which time will preserve even more carefully than if they were imprinted upon rock. They are the footsteps of earnest workers in the great kingdom of God—true men and women who lived well and left behind them lasting memorials of their usefulness. They were the pioneers of Methodism in this country—the advance-guard of a mighty army which is still passing in splendid procession, and will continue “marching on till Jesus comes.”

Never has the human brain been busier than now to solve the problem of the double authorship of the history of this world. Two theories have been advanced to explain the life and progress of humanity on earth. One teaches that all history is the play of chance forces. Accident rules in the place of law. Civil commotions and religious upheavals, precipitated into the arena of current events by unaccountable and unapproachable sources of power, are to be classed with the apparently causeless drifting of a thistle-down in the motionless atmosphere. The other commands us to believe that everything happens because it must so happen. The destiny of man is diked on both sides, and he runs in a groove because he can not help it. This view converts every one of us into a machine, without will or purpose, and therefore without responsibility. Moreover it eliminates God from the management of a world which he built for his own glory, and releases

both man and nature from the necessity of contact with a divine government. Both of these methods of explaining events are to be discarded, because they compel us to believe that the life-work of every man is the result of either chance or fate.

There is only one solution of this problem. It is this: Underneath all human history there is a divine order to which the life of the world is subject. In perfect harmony with this supernatural order, each one of us is invested with moral freedom, will-power, and full responsibility.

We live under a reign of law. God is ruler over all. We can work for him or against him. A little distance ahead of us is the judgment seat of Christ. No man was ever tossed up to the track of duty by the out-burst of an unseen volcano. We are what we will to be.

Just at this point we mark the movement of a divine hand. A line is drawn, and a danger-signal is displayed. God now calls attention to the fact that he is there—and at once every reverent spirit obeys his sovereign will. In the language of an American essayist: "There is a bound beyond which even the free will of man does not—I do not say cannot—in any case go. The great aspirations of some conquerors have been almost gratified, but in the almost lies the secret of historical progress. They failed on the eve of satisfaction. It was thus with Alexander on the Oxus, and with Napoleon at Leipsic and Moscow and Waterloo. The world came just to their

hand, and then the prize slipped away. Had the human plan been wrought out, there would have been retrogression for universal man. General conquest is not the will of a benevolent God. We are an enigma to ourselves, unless with the torch of revealed truth we throw light upon our pathway in the past. We have permitted Draper and Buckle and the whole materialistic school to go on with their destructive work of showing that all human history can be explained on the ground of laws of climate and temperament, and the like, and we have failed to thunder out our conviction that, as God has been honored and his law obeyed, men have steadily improved in all the elements of civilization; and that when they have failed here they have retrograded toward barbarism."

Beyond all question, the rise and progress of Methodism in this country is a most notable illustration of the double authorship of history. Our fathers sought to follow the will of God in the salvation of the people—and all Heaven seemed to be with us in the work. Under the inspiration and leadership of our Lord, we are still toiling year after year to lift the nation nearer to God; and it makes us justly proud of our record to know that the history of the American Republic would lack a large chapter in the department of religious achievement if the work of the Methodists were left out.

Before I go farther it is right that I should give a few dates which will explain the meaning of several of our "Centennial" celebrations.

1. The "Methodist Societies" were organized in 1739—hence the centenary of 1839 pointed to the one hundredth year of Methodism as a revival movement.

2. In 1766 the first Methodist preachers began their work in America; and so, in 1866 our brethren of the M. E. Church (North) celebrated the centenary of Methodist preaching in America.

3. In 1784 Dr. Coke and Francis Asbury were recognized as superintendents or bishops, and the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in the city of Baltimore. In the year 1884, then, we celebrated the Centenary of organic Methodism in America. That was the one hundredth year of the church life of Methodism in this country.

4. Our Richmond demonstration commemorates the origin of our Church in this city in the year 1799—just one century ago.

One of the most brilliant writers in America has said that "for the purposes of history, centuries are arbitrary divisions of time, but they are convenient when we wish to sum up results." A great social or religious movement may overlap them, and, at the end of any given hundred years, may offer no special reason for looking back to the beginning. Still, a completed century is a good resting-place from which to count the steps by which a nation or a church has been slowly traveling down from the past to the present.

Says a writer: "Unless we study the facts in

detail, we, as Methodists, can scarcely appreciate the changes in church and country since 1784. When the 'Christmas Conference' was held at the close of this year, none save a prophet could have foretold of Methodism such an errand of destiny. In 1775 there were in the whole country, less than two thousand churches and fifteen hundred ministers; and among them all there were but few Methodist preachers. In 1784 the Baptists had nearly five hundred churches and as many ministers. The Congregationalists had six hundred ministers, and the Presbyterians one hundred and seventy-five. Methodism had made rapid gains since 1766, and counted one hundred and four preachers and fifteen thousand members."

The same writer tells us that "President Stiles of Yale, in an important sermon, predicted that by the end of another century the Wesleyans would disappear and be heard of no more."

In the year 1784 measures were taken for the formation of the Protestant Episcopal Church in this country, but the plan was not carried into effect until 1790. Roman Catholicism in the United States was as yet without an episcopate, and, of course, "no bishop, no church"; so that the Methodist Church, as an organized church, is older than both the Episcopal and the Roman Catholic Churches in this country.

It is a striking fact that "the Roman Catholic Church was fully organized as was ours, in the city

of Baltimore, though not until 1789, with John Carroll, brother to one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, as its first Bishop." Asbury and Carroll, men who in religious belief were antipodal, set out from the same city, each to become the leader of a mighty host. "They fixed upon Baltimore," said Bishop Carroll, "because it was the oldest town in the State which was the most numerously peopled by the followers of the true religion in America." Times have changed in regard to that matter also. "Baltimore is now distinctly a Methodist center, and Maryland is predominantly a Methodist State."

Perhaps I have detained you too long already with these introductory remarks. We are here to-night to think and speak of "The influence of Methodism in the history of the American Republic."

I. First, let me say that the influence of the Methodist movement was distinctly felt in the development of the social structure from which the government itself received shape and inspiration for its great work among the nations of the earth.

We are called "a church of the people." All classes, including especially the masses, are represented in the Methodist Church. This leads us to ask, What is the nature of the social compact which binds together the great body of the American people? I reply, It is a union of all hearts and all interests for the promotion of the public good. Underneath the ballot-box is this fundamental idea. The appeal is to the people.

The next question to be asked is this: What part did the Methodists take in the creation of this compact? I answer:

1. The social nature of the Methodist religion made the Methodists social in deportment everywhere, and this shaped largely the sentiment of brotherhood among the people. On the court-green, in the public road, at home, in the company of genial friends or traveling strangers—no matter where, the Wesleyan salutation was cordial, and its tendency was to melt down barriers and make all hearts beat as one. The new religionists seemed to demand a universal application of the Scripture text, “As touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you, for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.” And yet there was a method in the manifestation of this love. Around a given center ten thousand concentric rings may whirl, but the condition of uniform motion must be found in the fact that every point upon the circumference of each circle must be equi-distant from the common center. The early Methodist kept his Saviour at the very center of his spiritual life, and every point of his moral being seemed to revolve in harmony around the fraternal love of Christ for the multitude. That gave him an impulse to meet and talk with men. He longed to lift them to a better life and save them forever.

It was Henry Clay who said “the fraternal spirit exhibited by these brotherly Methodists always

makes me feel happy and at home in their company," but he did not emphasize their loyalty to Christ as the source of their loving-kindness to all men. Sometimes their uncompromising devotion to the cardinal doctrines of the word of God invoked temporary unpopularity, but they were never without friends even in the ranks of their opponents. They contended that social convulsions and national sins are the result of certain conditions in the hearts of the people, and that souls must be won to make reforms possible and permanent. This soul-winning, they claimed, could be assured only by loving men now as if Christ still walked the earth.

What would they have thought of the modern doctrine that "the instincts of the masses" can always be relied upon to elevate the human race? The instinct of the native African is theft. Murder dominates the Moslem. Deceit is the characteristic of the Sicilian. The instinct of the French masses is—revolution. The Methodists contended that what a nation needs is a correct national character, and that none save Christ could give it. In this country Methodism wielded a wonderful influence just at that danger-point, and saved the republic by seeking to save the men and the mothers at home. An English historian has said that the Wesleyan movement rescued England from the result of the French Revolution. An impress of like character was wrought upon the popular mind in this country by those who planted our Church all over this continent.

This process of training the people can be easily explained. The Methodist preacher aimed to create the best social conditions by regenerating the individual rather than by tampering with legislative assemblies. To secure this end, access to the people was necessary, and our itinerant system supplied the very plan by which the masses and our leaders could be brought face to face. At the fireside in winter, and under the shade-trees around the little cottage in summer, the people and their teachers met.

At a public meeting, Senator William Ballard Preston once said: "I reverence the Methodist preachers who wrought such miracles of power in moulding and drilling our raw population in Virginia and all over the land." Commodore Matthew F. Maury declared that the conservative forces of Methodism were a safeguard not only of church life but of the national life as well. Said he, "They move with great deliberation, and the country will never be harmed by either their conservatism or their enthusiasm in matters of religion." Senator R. M. T. Hunter said in 1861: "The white Methodists of Virginia outnumber nearly all the other white professors of religion in the State put together, and they always seem to be willing to accept their share of the burden of responsibility which comes to them on that account." Such has been the testimony of thousands of the leading men in our country.

2. In the creation of the social compact, not only did the Methodists teach the value of a spirit of fra-

ternity among the people, but they also set an example of submission to authority on account of their reverence for law. This is the real source of their conservative influence. Our method of government is hedged in by the supremacy of law. Our plan of ministerial supply providing a man for every place and a place for every man, is in accordance with the operation of an invariable statute. The limitation of the pastoral term, together with many other features of our ecclesiastical system, points to a law-making power, and we submit with reverence to the impartial administration of our own peculiar form of Church government. Our motto seems to have been, Personal liberty without the freedom of the mob, and lawful restraint without ecclesiastical despotism. The masses have felt the force of this through the teaching and practice of our own congregations and our law-abiding pastors, and in this way our influence has been felt in support of well-regulated government.

James Monroe is reported to have said: "I honor the memory of the great men who founded the Methodist Church in America: they taught us how to reverence the sovereignty of law." Chief Justice Marshall said, at an early day in our history, "The Methodists are destined to shape much of the public thought of this country." Gen. Robert E. Lee said, "The Methodists in this land exert a controlling influence over the public mind. No political party could be found that would attempt to ride over the verdict of that church upon a distinctly moral issue."

Permit me just here to make honorable mention of those hardy path-finders who went ahead of us a hundred years ago and blazed the way along the line of conquest. A few intrepid men on horseback undertook to pit their views of divine truth against the canons and creeds of men and churches that had resources by the million at hand to crush out all adventurous opposition, but the mounted rangers in hedge and highways went on singing and preaching, as if they could not see the barricades that were built to impede their victorious advance.

At the end of the first century, the Apostolic Church had won less than five hundred thousand adherents. At the end of the first century of Methodism we had, in 1885, more than five million of members, having outstripped the Fathers, whom we honor, just ten to one in the results of earnest work.

The pioneer Methodist preachers, who were the leaders in this movement, were generally men of fine physique—broad-shouldered, strong-armed, with muscles of densest texture, capable of any test of physical endurance. Few among the number fell below the standard of an art-model for the hand of Phidias. They were like the chosen members of the general staff of a field-marshal—always ready for the word of command, and never so happy as when a forlorn hope held out a challenge to spirits as daring as any that ever followed the crest of mail-clad knight to the levelling of battle-scarred walls in the high noon of the age of chivalry.

It requires a brave heart to undertake the work of a reformer in the early days of a newly-settled country, when reverence for sacred things is a rarity rather than a rule—when the preacher must face mobs, if he is to have a hearing at all, and submit to caricature and insult and injury, and perhaps ride up to the little chapel on the roadside through a shower of stones. It requires the courage of a fearless man to go into the untouched forest, and cut out the tangled undergrowth and risk the fangs of venomous reptiles, or hew down whole acres of timber, or drain the swamp and fight back the monster of the bear-den or the wolf-pack, in order that canals may be dug for drainage and the new-ground prepared for the first assault of the sub-soil plow.

Just such a life it was which was led by the early Methodist preachers. It was the life of a rifleman on the frontier—of a reformer among courtly men as well as ruffians—of a lumberman in the wilderness with no other reliance for success save the temper of his axe and the promise of God.

Educated in the class-room these men knew how to pray. Wise in the use of the Holy Scriptures, they knew how to talk, and when to be silent. Prudent, but persistent—modest, but brave when the time came to act—clothed with the garment of humility, but ever ready to let the world know that God had also given to each one the mantle of a prophet—social, but serious—terrific in denunciation, but tender as the pulse of a babe in winning a penitent

to Jesus—they were a brotherhood of heroes, fit to have borne an equal share with Peter and Paul in the sorrows and dangers of the first century of the Apostolic Church. To-day we honor their memory, and pray God that the inspiration of their holy lives may be a benediction to the Church until the end of the world.

II. Again. Not only was the influence of the Methodist movement felt in the growth of public opinion in this country, but, for more than a hundred years it has been an important factor in the promotion of industrial enterprise among the people. The Methodists have always accepted the doctrine that

“ In His furrowed fields around us
God has work for all who will;
Those who may not scatter broadcast,
Yet may plant it hill by hill.
Soon Life's spring-time will be over,
And its autumn days will come;
Happy, then, will be those workmen
Who have sheaves to carry home.”

The Wesleyan dictum read, “ All at work, and always at work.” Idle hands never built the palace of a king. Our people were taught that some honest pursuit in the great industrial world was necessary not only to obtain a livelihood but to meet the tithe-gathering of our Lord. Business enterprise in this country has been promoted by the Wesleyan faith in three separate ways:

I. By association of ideas. The Methodist religion calls for a full day's work, as we are taught to

live only one day at a time; and it appeals to its adherents to finish their life-work before they die. A religious career which begins with conscious salvation to expel doubt, and is rounded up with the evidence of Christian perfection at the close of a consecrated life, will naturally impress the minds of thinking men whether they are in the Church or outside of it. It was so in the past. Like the swing of a scythe in a harvest field, our conscientious convictions as to the best use to be made of time and opportunity, commanded and controlled the views of all who were inclined to sympathize with us in our work. In this way our influence has been felt by both the working classes and the capitalists in every decade of the past century.

2. By the inspiration of a life-purpose to be always in earnest, the Wesleyans have been a blessing to the business world around them. Their idea of gospel measure is "good measure, pressed down, and shaken together and running over." They believe their Lord when he says, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." This extatic consciousness of supernatural life compels them to shout sometimes. Their enthusiasm has made the whole country enthusiastic.

A hundred years ago there were four Wesleyan rules in common use for the government of business life. First. "Make all you can; save all you can; give all you can." Second. "For the financial support of the work of God bring a penny a week and a

shilling a quarter.” Third. “Do good, especially to them that are of the household of faith; employing them preferably to others, buying of one another, helping each other in business; and so much the more because the world will love its own, and them only.” Fourth. “Never borrow without a probability of paying, or take up goods without a probability of paying for them.” In obedience to these rules the early Methodists usually prospered in the management of their industrial pursuits. They made money and used it for the glory of God. They were often so zealous in conspicuous fields of enterprise that Chief Justice Chase used to say: “They can pray harder, talk faster, fight the devil longer, and sing louder when the game is coming in than any other hunters on the continent.” They were as tireless as a circular saw, and were never content to stop work until all the timber had been prepared for the Master’s use. The outside world watched and applauded our zeal, and its effect was felt in the everyday life of all the people.

3. Moreover we have reached the working classes by our sympathy and practical benevolence. Many of the neglected ones have toiled all the more industriously because they felt that they were looked at and cared for by somebody. This conviction has given a sense of rest to many a troubled soul, and at times it has arrested a spirit of insubordination which might have brought sorrow to the homes of the poor as well as the rich. A Methodist has never



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been known to lead a labor riot in this or any other land. Our people seem to have been so busy in the effort to make an honest living that they had no time to mingle with the boisterous throng.

This earnest, single-hearted, unremitting devotion to duty has been as frequently attested by the capitalist as by the wage-earner. Amos Lawrence, of Boston, said: "I get more work out of a live Methodist than out of anybody else." Commodore Vanderbilt, of New York, remarked in the company of Dr. Charles F. Deems: "I can tell a Methodist what to do, and then go away and leave him, but the most of men have to be told and sometimes pushed until the work is done." The provision which the Methodists have made for preaching the gospel to the poor will never be rewarded until we reach the next world.

III. Again, not only has Methodist influence been an element of power in shaping the social and industrial interests of the republic, but the educational development of the nation has been in large measure the result of the training of the people by Methodist preachers who established schools wherever they were sent to do the work of God.

We Methodists do not believe in the evolution of the human race, but we do believe in the evolution of the human mind. Thousands of years ago the Chinese decided that their civilization had reached perfection. It was decreed that any attempt to alter or improve it should be met with the death-penalty.

After a time it began to die. Conditions of life change, and the customs of a people must change accordingly. The Wesleyans have always sought to face the future; and it was easy to see in the outstart of our work in this country that we must either educate the young who were providentially committed to our care or surrender our commission to lead those whom we were called to save. Schools were established at once. The printing-press was used to disseminate knowledge; out-of-the-way districts of territory were visited by the clerical book-agent; tracts and catechisms were distributed; Sabbath Schools were instituted for the instruction of our children on the Lord's day, and a general spirit of enquiry was awakened among the masses. From that time we have been an educating agent in the land as well as an evangelistic Church.

It has been well said that, "In Methuselah's time, if a man committed murder, no one outside of his own tribe ever heard of it until the nineteenth century archæologists dug up and interpreted the tablet which recorded it." The world moves. We cannot afford to go back and pitch a tent in the long ago. We planted then and left the growth to God. But it is also true that our past thoughts are still at work in the souls of those we met in other days. The mental evolution is constantly going on. Wireless telegraphy will one day conduct our correspondence. Now it is human philanthropy to which we are to look for the tuition of the multitude and the

recasting of our own forms of thought in the lives of those who constitute the present generation.

The Methodists saw at an early day that the school-room, next to the pulpit, was essential in order that a religious life might not be hindered by ignorance and vice. It was through their work in part that the education of the masses became one of the safeguards of the republic. It is a fact that the Methodists to-day have a larger number of denominational schools than any other evangelical denomination in the country. Our collegiate institutions number three hundred. This source of power alone has given to our church a notable place in the educational work of the nation.

It would be an act of neglect on my part if I should fail to mention the extraordinary methods of tuition which were adopted by the itinerant Methodist preachers in the heroic days of the Church. They went everywhere and met the people in their homes. They carried with them a library of information gathered from private study and personal observation. They told everything they knew. When the Annual Conference adjourned they exchanged appointments. New pastors gave new items of information to the settlers in each new field of labor. So the work went on with a divine impulse, providing a new chain of instructors and pupils in the great university of the people. After twenty-five years of such talking and listening the Methodist layman, as the result of personal contact with his Methodist

pastor, found himself to be the possessor of quite a liberal education. In many homes this wandering prophet of God was the only teacher, and the family circle was the only lecture-hall in which the residents of a whole neighborhood might ever have a chance to learn the truth. This peculiar educational process was the natural outcome of that feature of our ecclesiastical system which we call "the itinerant ministry."

Sometimes we are told that the inflexible rule upon which it rests will become a burden to our learned divines in the twentieth century, but we have no fear that a lack of loyalty will ever harm our plan of work. It was proclaimed all over the land between the years 1760 and 1840 that the Methodist itinerancy would soon perish from sheer feebleness of the appointing power to secure obedience. There were some secessions of men and churches, but the spirit of God held us together and sanctified the new mode of sending pastors to congregations. And now as we look back the system is seen to have been nothing less than an inspiration designed of God to introduce a new era of church work. There was a necessity for it which never could have been met in any other way. That necessity exists to-day, and it will continue to exist so long as church machinery is believed to be helpful to the work of God. I believe that when the Angel of the resurrection comes there will be thousands of Methodist preachers who will simply leave their horses and their saddle-bags out there

in the road and go straight home to greet King Immanuel on his throne.

Let me tell you plainly that, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the itinerancy has been, through all these long years of driving work, the right arm of Methodism the world over. No other denomination of Christians in this country has so few vacant pulpits; and none has such facilities for putting the right man in the right place at the right time. Modify it we can in whatever way we may deem the wisest—still, the system will remain as an integral part of our distinctive church history. Other Christian churches, whose ministers have become itinerant in fact without the order and fitness of law like that in the Methodist Church, might be greatly benefited—I say it with all deference—by some adaptation of this effective system for supplying every church with a suitable pastor. Let no man dream that we will ever surrender our “itinerant ministers.”

In the center of the broad dome of the Pantheon at Rome there is a circular opening more than twenty feet in diameter. In the stormy autumn the rain descends through it upon the pavement of stone beneath, which is a tessellated flooring, collected by skillful hands from many quarries widely separated from each other. Each representative of the rock-beds of conquered provinces shares equally with every other cube of stone. The rain comes down upon all alike. And then, when the winter is over and gone and the March winds are blowing fresh

and keen from the tops of Alpine ranges, it is a joy and a comfort to the sentinel within the building to halt where the sunshine falls and warm his chilled fingers in the life-giving beam. So it is that the Methodist itinerancy provides for each and all alike. If times are hard and the work is rough and human hearts are not what they ought to be, then the gentle rain of pity descends upon each and all alike. And when the season of dreary days and long, dark nights has passed away, then the genial sunshine of a better day comes with generous greeting and a touch of warmth to every faithful sentinel whose devotion to the church still holds his feet to the same round of duty, and whose brave heart still beats in loving fellowship with those who share with him the trials and the triumphs of a prophet's life. God bless forever the wonderful work which has been wrought by our itinerant ministry. It has been the only teacher of millions in the homes of the American people.

IV Not only has the social, industrial and educational development of our country borne testimony to the influence of Methodism in the growth of the nation, but the religious status of the land could not have been what it is to-day without the earnest evangelical work of the Methodists during the past one hundred years. Sweeping revivals of religion have marked our advance during every decade of the church. Our own membership has grown rapidly on that account. It has been estimated that nine millions of souls have been brought to Christ by Metho-

dist preachers and laymen since 1840. Of that number nearly three million, or about one-third of the number converted at our altars, have been received into other churches. We are glad to know that other religious denominations have been benefited by the results of our work, and that their zeal has been stimulated by the progressive spirit of our people. Much of that spirituality which is essential to the existence of Methodism has been imparted to evangelical believers whose methods of ecclesiastical government differ widely from our own.

The whole country has been quickened by the missionary spirit of the Methodists. Philanthropists were once anxious that State prisons should be imposing structures whose architectural finish might reflect the public spirit of those who built them. The genius of Methodism suggested that the soul of the prisoner was worth more than the fine cage which held him. Our gospel net was made for deep sea fishing, and it has been hauled with marvelous skill. I could give you a number of facts to illustrate these statements, but time will not permit and I must forbear. Suffice it to say, our record of comparative statistics has already been published to the world. We have in this country a membership of six million—a million more than any other evangelical church. We are training seven million children in our Sunday Schools and other institutions for the education of the young. We own more than a hundred million dollars' worth of church property,

and not a day passes without the dedication of at least four new churches to the service of God. We have nearly a hundred thousand preachers, itinerant and lay, employed in various fields of labor.

Governor Rollins of New Hampshire, in his fast-day proclamation April 6, 1899, said: "The decline of the Christian religion, particularly in our rural districts, is a marked feature of the times, and steps should be taken to remedy it." If that be true we know nothing of it. Our mission is to save souls and build up the Church of God. The Lord of the harvest is on that side, and we expect to continue bringing in the sheaves. This land is dotted all over with our battle-flags floating triumphantly from the dismantled towers of captured strongholds. Thank God, we are ready for the campaign of the twentieth century, and with the help of prayer and faith and the power of the Holy Ghost we expect to make full proof of our ministry as colaborers with Jesus in the salvation of the world.

Sometimes it is said that during these latter days the efficacy of prayer has been limited by a lack of faith. If that be true, we are not witnesses to the truth. Our people still have power with God in prayer. Thousands of authentic instances could be given to attest the value of this assertion. Only three or four are needed to serve my purpose.

A Methodist engineer on one of our western railroads recently made public a fact which illustrates the possibility of an immediate answer to prayer when

the petition is hoisted by faith up to the very windows of heaven. He knelt down one afternoon and asked God to guide him over the road and give him a safe return to his loved ones at home. With the distinct conviction that when danger came near it would be pointed out and mercifully averted, he mounted the cab and started. That night he pulled a train of ten passenger cars and they were all well loaded. He was behind time and was anxious to make a certain point, and therefore he was driving his engine to the utmost speed of which it was capable. He was on a section of the road usually considered the best piece of work on the line, and was endeavoring to make the most of it, when he suddenly received a premonitory warning that he must stop the train at once. Something seemed to tell him that this was absolutely necessary to save life. He looked at his train. It was all right. He strained his eyes down the track, but could see no signal of danger. He listened to the working of his engine. It was in the very best running order. Nevertheless he obeyed the supernatural conviction which had now fastened itself all the more firmly upon his mind and resolved to halt the train at once. So soon as this was done he took his lamp in hand, and at the distance of only sixty feet ahead, he saw what convinced him that God had warned him in answer to prayer. Right before him was a switch at a country siding, the thought of which had never entered his mind. It had not been used since he took work on the road and it was known

to be spiked. Evidently it was now open to hurl his train from the track.

This switch led into a stone quarry from whence material for bridges had been taken, and the switch was left there in case stone should be needed at any time, but it was always kept locked and the switch-rail was spiked. That night it was open, and but for a divine message to the engineer, the engine would have dashed through it, and at the end of the track—it was only ten rods in length—the train moving at the rate of fifty miles an hour would have struck a solid wall of rock. Only God can tell what might have been the result of the wreck. The warning given to the faithful railway man that night needs no explanation so long as our Lord continues to answer prayer.

In the year 1874 I was invited to take part in revival work in the county of Dare on the coast of North Carolina. To reach the designated point inland it was necessary that we cross a body of water between the sandhills along the ocean shore and the forest-covered mainland about twenty-six miles away. A squall struck our little skiff when we were only half way over, and our sail was torn from the mast. In a few moments the waves of the sound were boiling around us and threatening to engulf us.

Just then an aged Methodist who had taken passage with us to visit the home of his son in Tyrrell County, clasped both hands in prayer and said, "O God, spare us now and let the high sea go down

and bring us safe to land.” I saw the cloud above us melt away in less than ten minutes. There was a great calm. The old man’s prayer was answered and we gained the shore in safety.

In the year 1885 while I was pastor of a church in Charlottesville, a large lumber-house with an adjoining factory burned down at noonday. The conflagration threatened the destruction of the town. The wind was high and blowing with a sort of fiendish fierceness toward the heart of the business quarter, and the ruin of many merchants seemed to be a question of only a few hours at most. Blazing brands hurtling through the hot air had already kindled the dry, warped shingles on the roofs of a score of houses, and three of the principal churches were in imminent danger.

Just then I saw an aged Methodist—a devout woman of God—with closed eyes pleading with her Lord as she leaned against her gate, and saying, “O Father, spare the homes of thy children and save us from this terrible fate.” The wind shifted in less than five minutes. The great tongues of flame and smoke shot away from the edge of the town toward the open fields adjacent, where there was nothing to consume. In answer to prayer God did save the homes of his people.

When I was pastor of the Cumberland Street Church in Norfolk, a member of our Conference was assisting me in the conduct of a revival service. The meeting seemed to promise no results and our hearts

were anxious about the work of the Lord. Across the street from the church building was an humble home in which upon the ground floor lay helpless a poor invalid—a member of Cumberland Street Church. I called to see her one morning and told her how the revival work appeared to be hindered by the powers of darkness. Said she “I spent all last night in prayer to God for a blessing upon the church. Our God has heard my prayer. Many souls will be saved before the meeting comes to an end.” That night God led the way, and before the close of the revival one hundred and eighteen souls were born of the Spirit into the kingdom of God.

The Christian Church declining? We know nothing about it. The one thing we do know is that Methodism is marching on. If any are tired of the campaign, let them break ranks and go back—but we go on.

Heaven is our camping-ground, and we never intend to stack arms until we have finished the fight and left the world to be forever at home with Jesus in that land where the weary are at rest.

II.

BUSINESS INTERESTS, AS AFFECTED BY METHODISM.

BY COL. JOHN P. BRANCH.

The advancement of the business interests of a country is the duty of every citizen. It begins at home: "He that provideth not for his own household hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." But the same Word tells us that we are not to look upon our own things only but also on the things of others. "None of us liveth to himself." Every man's interests are wrapped up with others. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

It is essential that you and yours be fed, and clothed and housed; it is also essential that your neighbor be thus blessed. In a business sense, as well as in a religious sense, every one is his "brother's keeper," and this relation is reciprocal. Nothing comes to a good man but what is in a sense common to his fellow-man. Business interests then are the arrangements, modes and opportunities by which what is the good of one may become the good of all. Have you wealth? It becomes dross and "filthy lucre" if hoarded in a miserly way. If lavished only on self, it enures to pride and vanity, and is no better

than the miser's. When shared with others wisely it will serve the purpose for which God gave it.

If God's word teaches anything, it teaches that every human being is a steward entrusted with one or more talents—responsible to the Giver of them for their use and improvement. No one can hide his one talent in the earth, or squander his five foolishly, or use them without regard to the interests of the owner without condemnation.

The man who uses his means, be they little or much, "to make two blades of grass grow where only one grew before," to equip and send off ships to carry the fruits of husbandry and toil; to make the waterfall grind the grain; to build the iron railway to bring distant people together and help to unify the race—the man who does these things in the spirit of righteousness and the fear of God, is in his sphere "a doer of the word," and an heir of faithful Abraham, who is not on record as a preacher, but who nevertheless so impressed himself upon the world as to be revered in pagan as well as Christian lands.

"Christianity in earnest" elevates men in business life. It forbids all that wrongs our neighbor; it is good will in active exercise. Like its founder, it seeks to do good to all, and at all times. It makes a man rescue his fellow who has fallen among thieves—whether he has been robbed of his money or his character—and put him on his feet again, and rejoice in seeing him walk in the strength of manhood.

In the days of the Wesleys it went into the purlieus of London and other cities, and transformed the wicked and abandoned into useful men. It went to Cornwall and after great conflicts with almost heathen miners it left them peaceable and orderly, and so effectually reformed the community that its mark remains upon it to this day. Less than a hundred years have passed since Wesleyan Methodism went to Australia and New Zealand, when those countries were inhabited by cannibals: now they are large producers of wool, provisions and other necessities of life and industry, and the Methodists there are raising money by the hundred thousand for the twentieth century movement.

The great truth annunciated by the inspired writer—"Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people"—has a thousand proofs in both sacred and profane history.

The most methodical and industrious man of the eighteenth century was John Wesley. His people imitated him, and with their thrift and economy enriched their country.

III.

THE CONNECTIONAL IDEA AND THE LOCAL CHURCH.

BY WILLIAM V. TUDOR, D. D.

It is a story of one of the early Methodist preachers, that driving up with his family to a house in a region of country which he had found to be rudely inhospitable, and hailing, "House! house!" the question came from the opened door, "Where are you from?" to which the itinerant halloosed back, "We are from everywhere but here, and we want to be from here as soon as possible." In this witty answer we may recognize one form of putting in speech the idea of the Methodist itinerancy. Every idea distinctive of the economical system or management of Methodism has grown out of the itinerancy, which has itself grown out of the one grand, original, inspiring idea; viz., "Preach the word." Wesley wrote to one of his preachers, "If you desire to promote the work of God you should preach abroad"—he meant field preaching—"as often as possible;" and adds, "Nothing destroys the devil's work like this." "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil," we read. The

commission of the Government a year ago to Dewey and Sampson and Schley was not to engage the enemy, not to encounter or fight, but, in express terms, to destroy the Spanish fleet at Manilla; to destroy Cervera's fleet. The evolutions were for that. Field-preaching was one of Wesley's evolutions "to destroy the devil's works," as we have quoted him. Not field-preaching, but preaching was the conscious commission of Methodism to destroy the works of the devil, to preach the work of Christ. By means of preaching the work of Christ is published and promoted.

The first and main business is to herald the gospel of the grace of God to sinners; to testify the meaning of salvation, both as to its final cause, and its immediate or progressive approaches to the end. The business is with the individual soul, or, with the universal human soul—the soul, which in each and all of mankind is so much the same in essence, capacity and condition, as to be practically one. To save that soul, in the gospel sense, is not a question principally of organization or system or connection, but is a matter of effort as prescribed by the great Saviour, "Preach the gospel to every creature." For the purpose of this effort the soul is one—the closest unity man can have with his fellow-man; not a tie, but an identity, as in an accepted sense we use the term identification—identified in interests and fate; everywhere needing to repent for sin and to be saved for the hope of everlasting life. The universal soul

is the world that God loved, and gave himself to its salvation. We want to preach to that soul, to enlighten it, if possible, to inform, to expound the truth of destiny, to tell the soul certain things that concern the human being, if he values life and well-being. The soul is in darkness, and light alone is congenial to life; the soul is a lost sheep, and the fold alone is safe. We have to tell the soul glad tidings of great joy, joy so great and tidings so good because condemnation and death were foredoomed if there were no salvation. But Oh, joy! a Saviour has come into the world. Preach; proclaim God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the creator and preserver of all mankind. Preach; proclaim the kingdom of God at hand to man, with the hope of eternal life, or immortality. Preach, the soul a dying sinner, redeemed through great love; the salvation to be accepted or else neglected; reformation by regeneration. Preach; awake the sleeping soul, convict of sin, exhort to repentance, invite to Christ, witness to the strange warmth of peace and joy in justification through believing in Jesus. Preach faith, deal with the soul sunk and dead in sin; the sinner has no conscience left apparently; he has no moral sense, but only carnal sense; he is immoral and does not care; he is bound for eternal torment; he is hard and contemptuous and unbelieving, the enemy of God; but Divine love hovers over him; for him a Saviour was born and crucified; infinite pity yearns toward him, grace to him abounds, the spirit-world cares for him, all kind-

ness and tenderness and mercy encourage his repentance, heaven wants him and will have him for a word of consent—it is just such a soul may know the raptures of pure, everlasting life; the influences and forces of love surround and press upon him. Preach; press the gospel on him, on the soul, the world-soul, all the world—the world is small to the forces that with ever accelerated movement are traversing and engirding the globe—to every creature; it was Jesus' first and great concern; to make all men know the riches of the glory of the mystery, Christ the Saviour among us, a glorious hope. Preach to the soul buried in sorrow and in sin, lying at hell's dark door, plunged in a gulf of dark despair, a trembling sinner. Preach.

It was from the preaching of Wesley that Methodism arose. It was the preaching and experience of conversion or the new birth that inspired and led to management or system, such as all endeavors and enterprises of men associated by a common faith or idea or purpose inevitably assume, or wisely ordain for achievement and success. The founder of Methodism, the author of the economical or governmental system, was not Wesley the churchman, not Wesley the priest, nor the administrator of ordinances or sacraments, but Wesley the evangelist, the preacher. The class-meeting, Wesley's earliest institution, was a means of preaching: the lay preacher, the Methodist preacher arose out of it. Preaching was the thing, as we say colloquially; it was the first and

great commandment. The soul was the unit, the tie, the necessary, inevitable connection of man with man, social necessarily because identical, society inevitably existing through the universal soul, one and inseparable. Preach the gospel to every creature. God will also take care of the connectional idea. He names his incorporation of it “kingdom”—the kingdom of heaven, or, of God. It was the Saviour’s only term for the association of men with men in God, the kingdom of heaven. In the two places only in his reported words in which he says “church,” the term means synonymously the congregation of the faithful. One hundred and twelve times he uses the word “kingdom” to denote his “society,” God restoring and reorganizing his kingdom of souls, saved unto eternal life. It is in this higher, divine, and necessary connection of the kingdom that the fundamental idea of the Protestant era—the advanced Christian era of the world’s reformation—has been saved; the principle that there cannot be a more dangerous nor a more odious encroachment on the rights of the individual soul than when one officiously and unsolicited interferes with the sacred intercourse that subsists between him and his God; a principle which asserted itself and triumphed even over Luther, its doughty and irrepressible champion, when in the strength of his opinions he sought rigorously and severely to enforce them on his followers, who yet in great numbers saved the Reformation by refusing, having thrown off the authority of the Romish See,

to submit their consciences to the control of a monk. John Wesley was wiser. His original and expedient connection of members and preachers was with himself. That was the Wesleyan Methodist Connection at the earliest, and so named expressly; yet Wesley said, "Every preacher and every member may leave me when he pleases; but while he chooses to stay, it is on the same terms that he joined me at first."

At this point the idea of our connectional system begins to develop. Connection, you cannot escape it. All Christians, of many and familiar denominations, are connected, are bound together. The soul is the unit, the spiritual kingdom is the ideal, the eternal, heavenly kingdom is perfection. There is necessary and subordinate connection, as the different denominations have elected symbolical terms, convention, council, presbytery, assembly, association. In the strictest congregational church there is connection of local government, binding on pastor and people. As by a very eternal law of being, or through the universal soul, connection in church has ever become more and more intimate, and consolidated, binding ministers and laymen together in compact, administrative, and executive body. As by force of a law of souls, the Countess of Huntingdon undertook a connection of the followers of Whitefield, which later lapsed into the congregational polity. By various informing principles, or by providential hints, or by historical facts the connectional ties of different denominations have been organized

and named. Our Methodist church, or society, or Conference (the symbolical term peculiar to us), is connection with one man, John Wesley. Do not be startled, as though a man were the head of the church, or as though we were resigning the claim to be of the church of Christ. We might indeed partly elucidate our proposition and leave it established in a general way by quoting, as applicable to Wesley, (and which history and modern Methodism would not deny), the word we read in Scripture concerning Abel, the son of Adam: "He, being dead, yet speaketh." No man's voice of teaching has more rung through now nearly two centuries than that of Wesley. But our particular thesis is susceptible of yet wider demonstration or argument of support.

We understand that the Word of God very much leaves the church free to frame its ecclesiastical constitution, to form government, to order its observances of worship, out of its own self-organizing life. One life, of one man, Christ Jesus, by infinite pre-eminence, dominates and is reproduced in the universal church of true believers. An author has noted that the word "church" occurs in the Acts and the epistles, including the apocalypse, one hundred and twelve times—exactly the same number of times as "kingdom" in the gospels; while "kingdom" appears in only twenty-nine cases; the Apostles thereby conveniently expressing and easily emphasizing by the Spirit the institution of the kingdom, the church. With Paul, and in his writings, and by the same Holy

Spirit, the personal Christ, or his life, was apparently an advanced idea of the kingdom. He was not so much for baptizing into the church. With him Christ was everything. He said of himself that he had been crucified with Christ, and that he lived in him, and that to be a subject of the kingdom was to be in Christ; so pervading and all-containing and sufficient was the great, saving Christ. It looks as though, surveying the churches, partial and segregated, one of Paul, another of Apollos, and another of Cephas, the Apostle had the idea of Principal Fairbairn—or did not Fairbairn rather get it from Paul?—that the drift of the Church of believers toward the ideal unity would be, as Principal Fairbairn expresses it, and so he characterizes the earnest religious life of our time, by “the return to Christ.”

This to show the place and power of a person, the great first person of our faith and following. If admonition were needed, and possibly it may be, to universal Methodism to-day, admonition for any lack of efficiency and evangelistic power, it could not be couched in brief phrase more fittingly and significantly than in the words, “Return to Wesley.” Wesley said to the assembled Conference, and it was not denied, “I am, under God, a centre of union to all our travelling, as well as local preachers.” In anticipation of his death, and for the perpetuation of Methodism, Wesley vested all his own power in a hundred members of the ministry. So apostolic is his figure as that it is no unwarranted hyperbole to

say that with us now-a-days it takes a whole General Conference, Bishops and members, to incarnate one Wesley. As Wesley fixed the appointments of his preachers by very episcopal authority, or at his sole judgment, so now the General Conference nominates for the pulpits through the superintendents, or Bishops, whom it elects and sets apart for the service. Nomination to the pulpits; preaching unto soul-saving is the thing, the grand, unifying, connecting idea. This made it necessary that the pulpits should become inalienable property, as was done by trusteeship for the Connection. It made necessary also that the doctrines, spiritual laws, and the itinerancy should be defended in a species of unalterable constitution, so as to identify the church to which the members and property belonged, as is done in brief form in the items of our commonly-called Restrictive Rules, only six in number. Restriction was necessary in order that, as Dr. Tigert well says, in his "Constitutional History of American Episcopal Methodism," "the church itself may be protected from that most dangerous of all tyrannies, the tyranny of an oligarchy."

The value of such connection, particularly so large and extensive as that of Methodism has become, must be manifest, for manifold purposes for which the church of Christ exists on earth; purposes and results illustrated in all the great denominations or sects besides ourselves, although they may be called distinctively congregational, as distinguished from

connectional, in the peculiar sense applied to Methodism—the property of Methodism, or as Dr. Tigert puts it, “The term is technical and characteristic of the denomination.” The connection is realized in the several denominations by official boards, for example, for the maintenance of the ministry, for church extension, for the work of foreign and domestic missions, for education, and for the exertion of Christian influence upon the public, upon the nation, and upon the world.

For our particular connectional idea, and to appreciate it, we revert to the original and fundamental proposition of this paper, viz., “Preach the Word.” Some years ago on entering a family of Methodists I found them puzzling over the signature to a certificate of membership one of them had received—the name signed, and the letters or abbreviations following, “P C.” What did “P C.” mean? “Pastor” would have been all right and familiar. Through some neglect of their education they had not learned that the true style in Methodism is “P C.,” preacher in charge. The original Methodist preacher was little of the pastor, as the term in this day has come to mean an endeared and intimate relation to the families of the flock. He was more a flame of fire catching from place to place, a torch in hand applied from spot to spot. In the minutes of the first Conference of America Methodism, held in 1773, the appointments of the preachers read, “New York, Thomas Rankin; Philadelphia, George Shadford;

to exchange in four months," four months rather than four years, the limit of service in one place. Again the term was six months, then a year, then two years, the extreme down to a time easily within the memory of people still living; the four years possibility and limit being allowed by enactment only since the eventful period of the war of the States. The preacher, the herald, the torch, the flame of fire, the minister, the servant, the itinerant was to go everywhere, preaching the word. That was the genius of Methodism. There is no reason to-day, inherent in the nature of things, why the term should be four years rather than six months; or four years, and not five, or eight. None whatever. Large cities, small towns, rural districts afford at last no varying conditions essentially to vary the one commission, Preach the word. Culture, refinement, society afford no varying conditions. Education in the ministry should be the requirement as well for the mountains as for the plains, for the circuits as the stations. It was in the age of Washington, and Jefferson and Franklin and Patrick Henry that the early six-months' Methodist preachers in this country flourished. Again, the indefinite term, by appointment annually, would not be inharmonious with Methodism, and the itinerancy would not be necessarily impaired, provided the testimony of the preaching should be efficiently declared. Preach to the universal soul, wherever found. The highlands rather than the lowlands may be preferable, essen-

tial for the health of the itinerant or his family. Let him so represent, as bearing upon his appointment. His right to do so, and to be accommodated, if possible, has never been denied, has been freely and inherently accorded. To demand that one should be sent them to preach the word, if a people have not had it faithfully declared; to represent their ability to take care of a single man only, or a small family, and not a large; even to suggest the names of men of whom they know as mighty in word and doctrine, and as likely to be useful among them, preaching the word; such privileges and applications may not in reason be denied a congregation, circuit, or station. But it was early laid down as fundamental in Methodism, "We deny not the right of any people to choose their own pastors; but should our societies deem it expedient so to do, they would take on themselves a high responsibility, for they would destroy the itinerant system." Destroy the itinerancy; and what is the itinerancy? The journeying system; and how far can men journey? From circuit to circuit, from sea-shore to mountain, from city to city, from State to State, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and back again, from Maine to Georgia. And who journeys like the "transfer"?—a term originally appropriated for a soldier transferred from one company or troop, and placed in another, and later applied to an itinerant preacher transferred from one Conference to another. Who is so typically an itinerant as he, the transfer? Transferred from Con-

ference to Conference, not ever, in comity, courtesy and right, without his consent—consent often solicited and urged by the appointing power, or himself seeking transfer through force of providential circumstances that conspire and direct him to seek a change of general location, from West to East perhaps, by the distance of half a continent, yet the preacher having no more right to name his charge, city, station, or circuit, than the young man who, having answered satisfactorily the question, “Will he do that part of the work advised, at the time and place judged most for the glory of God?” is on the spot admitted into full connection.

At this point the local church must be found loyal as well as the itinerant man, and nothing in Methodism has been more exemplary and phenomenal than the submission and fidelity of the churches to their appointments. One of my earliest recollections, when I was a Sunday School small boy, is of hearing the new appointee of the Baltimore Conference to Fayette Street Church, Baltimore, say from the pulpit, at his first sermon, in an independent way, “I understand you all did not want me, and neither did I want to come; but here I am and mean to stay, and you will have to make the best of it.” The union of preacher and people was cemented by the word, and they had a grand year together. Nor does the general loyalty of the people exceed the hospitality and affection with which the preachers are regarded and entertained. Moreover, the local

preacher, as well as the itinerant, belongs to the connectional system, the preacher a permanent resident, a merchant, a mechanic, a lawyer, a physician, laboring gratuitously, a valuable assistant, an element of power. The providential force of the connectional idea, as we have viewed it in this paper, appears in this, that while there are changes and long, rapid moves of the itinerant ministry, yet also, by the care and labors and administration of these very itinerants there is localization, centralization, organization, permanent holding of territory, building up of churches; the Annual Conference being the firmament in which the preachers are held to their systematic revolutions. There have been wandering stars and comets from the first, but also from the first the local church has been established and settled by the connectional ministry as though it had itself been settled. I leave you to judge of the comprehensiveness and completeness of the connectional idea, all under God.

But now again, and finally, we revert to our proposition of the return to Wesley. He, at the start, had no notion of organizing a church *pro forma*, or for form's sake. To save the universal soul was his high conception. Individually saved souls should be witnesses for Jesus, "to tell to sinners round what a dear Saviour they had found," and by speaking often one to another to use a means for the conservation of their own spiritual life. One of their number, having gifts, grace, and the promise of use-

fulness, should be a preacher, to speak to souls saved and unsaved. The Methodist Church is a society of societies, a unit of units. The itinerant may fittingly represent the angel of the Apocalypse, having the everlasting gospel to preach, and flying. If it be a question of adaptation, of varied culture for varied classes of society, he flies—does not stay long at one place. He flies and another succeeds him. The situation is suited; he flies. Meanwhile he is preaching the word, doing the work of an evangelist. Return to Wesley; let all the preachers be evangelists, all the societies class-meetings, advising among themselves how to flee the wrath to come, how to save themselves and the souls of others; the annual appointment being a flying messenger; the one object being not to build up and caress and foster in pride of strength a local congregation, but to build up and swell the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in heaven.

The tendency in cities with each church or charge is to be wholly occupied with its own interests and increase. One of the leading ideas of this centennial occasion is to promote a closer union and coöperation. The motives and arguments for such association are so abundant and familiar as to make their presentation trite and commonplace. Moreover, all the denominations use such united effort. The aim of this paper has been, by a survey of the origin, history and peculiarities of our system—a field with which our younger people are little acquainted—to

show what is the true connectional spirit of Methodism, and to foster it. The purpose of the argument will be served if the permanent organization shall be effected which has already been contemplated in this centennial movement. So also a new era of expansion and prosperity for Methodism in our city will begin with the dawn of the twentieth century.

IV

METHODISM AND CITY EVANGELIZATION.

BY W. J. YOUNG, D. D.

Shelley is quoted as having said, "Hell is a city much like London." Most of us have used the well-worn saying, "God made the country; man made the town." These sayings are of interest as indicating the prevalent notion that the moral and religious conditions of municipal life are hopeless; that we must put up with them, saving only the few from the general ruin.

This pessimistic conception must give way before the confidence of the gospel that every man may be saved, and every society or community of men be redeemed. Surely no one who has felt the power of the Cross in his own heart will deny that this Cross is able to save unto the uttermost all men. It has not been long since I heard a man, but recently reclaimed from vicious habits, pleading, in a mission located in the slums of a city, with his old companions of both sexes to accept his Lord, offering as his chief argument, "If He can save a wretch like me, He can save you also."

The second of the sayings just quoted, like most current proverbs, has an element of falsehood in it. It is not true that the town is altogether a human product. The social nature of man, the use of nature's forces in the industrial and material progress of the world, these surely have their origin in God, and they have had most to do with the building of cities. We may say then that the city is a divine institution, and, as such may be brought, in every way, into harmony with the moral law of God. Let us not forget that the heaven of the glorified is spoken of as a city, the New Jerusalem. Let us not forget that our Master made the cities the centers of his own work, that he wept over the great city of Jerusalem, that it was almost within the precincts of the same city that he died on the cross and created our redemption. Let us not forget that the apostle to the gentiles did most of his preaching in the cities along his missionary routes, established in them the first Christian churches, and to them, for the most part, addressed his famous epistles.

The rapid growth of cities in modern times presents the chief problem for the Church of Christ. From 1880 to 1890, we are told, the city population of the United States increased sixty-one *per cent.*, while the rural population increased only fourteen *per cent.* From the same sources we learn that, with the same percentage of increase, the year 1920 would witness a city population ten millions in excess of the country population. This would mean the control of the

nation by the cities. The nation cannot be redeemed, unless the cities be first redeemed. Besides, this more rapid growth of our American cities in recent years is no mere accident. It would be easy to give reasons why it is so. The cities of Europe have had the same marvelous development. This tendency is, therefore, probably permanent, and the obligation is a pressing one that we save the cities of our nation—that we save this city.

The city is the center of influence, not only socially and industrially, but religiously as well. The city church is fast setting the fashion in matters ecclesiastical. The contact of the city and the country is so close now that even the tone of piety in the country church is thereby affected. The work in the foreign field leans in no small measure on our city churches and our city life. The mission boards depend on the liberality of our city churches. But still more: The world is getting very small in these latter days, and heathen eyes are observing the examples of so-called Christian civilization exhibited by our great cities. Alas! what do they see? We are told that some of the representatives of heathen religions at the World's Parliament of Religions made comparisons by no means flattering to our American vanity, between the moral status of Chicago and that of the great cities of the East. If we would save heathendom, we must save the cities of America.

Here, too, in our cities crime has its headquarters. If the citizen from the country desires to give loose

rein to his appetite he finds his opportunity not at home, but during the visit to the city. It is the city that has its slums, its gambling-houses, its brothel. It is the city that has developed and encouraged the desecration of the Sabbath. Within a few minutes' walk of the sacred desk, where I now stand, there is evil enough to damn a hundred cities like Richmond.

Whatever may be thought of the liquor problem as a whole, all reformers, of the better type, are agreed that the saloon is an evil and must go. Now it is in the city the saloon has most power. Here it draws down its rapacious maw the youth of our country. Here it so largely dictates who shall fill our public offices, and how our affairs shall be conducted. Here it makes cowards of our public leaders, even those who belong to our churches. Here it fills the jails and sends to the many dens of infamy its miserable wreckage.

The city is the home of poverty. What throngs, with hardly enough to eat, crowded into their narrow homes, surrounded by filth and squalor! Multitudes reduced to penury through drink, through improvidence, or through that competition which leads most of us to buy our goods in the cheapest market and to sell in the dearest, so that such wages are often paid, especially to women, as make it impossible for them to eke out a livelihood.

Side by side with the poverty, and not less dangerous, we find the vast accumulations of wealth, and the consequent luxury and selfishness and vice

of the more refined sort. In all our cities we have the slums of high life and the slums of low life.

Many of the noblest citizens of our great country have come from the midst of our foreign population. But we all know that, for the most part, it is the worst of the people abroad that comes to our shores. The percentage of criminals among the foreign-born population is three and one-half times as great as the percentage among the native-born population. All the forces that tend downward meet the foreigner when he comes to our shores. The politician uses him, and he becomes a voter before he can speak our tongue or know anything about our institutions. (Let us meet him with the Word of God.) I need not tell you that this vast population from beyond the seas congregates in our cities.

In the cities, too, Romanism is strongest. Against the dogmas and the worship of the Church of Rome I have nothing to say at this time. But that ultramontaniam which would have our affairs directed by a foreign potentate, even if claiming to be a follower of the great St. Peter, is a menace to the welfare of this republic.

The political corruption, against which all good people are so constantly protesting, is at its worst in our cities. Indeed, it is in the city that the throne of that autocrat, known as a boss, is erected. This corruption works mischief to every interest of municipal life, and, by fostering for profit so many haunts of vice, it interferes with the redemption of the people.

Let any man read the two books by Albert Shaw on municipal life in Great Britain and on the European Continent, and he will be convinced that the worst governed cities within the compass of Protestant civilization are the cities of America.

Only the careful student of the laboring classes realizes the social unrest prevailing in our American cities. The consciousness of the wide contrast between themselves and the capitalist in the distribution of wealth is leading very many of our masses to accept with eagerness socialism, communism, anarchism or any other theory of social reorganization which promises a short road to comfort and to fortune.

Now I desire to say, with all the emphasis of which I am capable, that, for all these conditions prevailing in our city life, the cure, and the only cure, is the saving power of our Lord's Gospel. That one simple principle enunciated in the law of love would make society everywhere pure, if put into practice. Not so long ago it was discovered that air might be liquified. Immediately it was asked, To what uses can it be put? The other day I read in a scientific journal that the air in this form might be carried below into the mines, and then let loose to drive machinery, to furnish cool air, and for other purposes. So our gospel—so far as it concerns our relation to our fellow-men—is crowded into that single sentence, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." But let it loose in the midst of the many problems of human life, and this single rule becomes a tremendous energy

which makes tyranny tremble, creates a new conception of the duties of the fortunate to the unfortunate; remodels society, and brings on the millennium. But this rule of love becomes effective, not when announced as a mere moral precept, whether from the sacred desk or from the platform of the secular lecturer, but only when written by the finger of the Holy Spirit, by the processes of the new birth, in human hearts. "Ye must be born again"—we must proclaim it. I deeply sympathize with every moral and social reform, with every movement looking to the betterment of society. I know that the purest and best Christians need to be told their private, social and civic duties. But it is equally certain that none of these things are effectual without the transforming power of divine grace. It is the Gospel only that may be called the power of God unto salvation.

In this work of city evangelization no church has a larger responsibility than our own. If we fail, the work will not be done. Our very history lays on us this obligation. We have not only followed the population as it has moved out to the new countries in the west, we have done the same with the progress of city life, whether among the rich or among the poor. Methodism has been not only Christianity in earnest, but missionary Christianity given to the work of the evangelist. When it ceases to be this, it ceases to be at all.

The simplicity of our worship adapts us to this special work. Fortunate was it for us that we got

rid of the English liturgy. Beautiful indeed is it, and for many persons a good means for winging their thoughts to heaven. But not by such means is the evangelization of the world to be accomplished.

Along with this might be mentioned the simplicity of our theology. Elaborate systems of religious thought have their place, but we need, in bringing the people to Christ, to lay stress on the few fundamentals of Christian truth—repentance, faith, the new birth, the witness of the Spirit. Not in Saul's armor, but with David's sling and stone, will the church lay low the Goliath of sin.

Our wonderful flexibility makes it easy for us to bring ourselves into harmony with varying conditions, and to meet the need of all classes of the people. No church, for example, has lent itself more readily than our own to that most recent religious movement known as the "Institutional Church."

Besides all this, we have gone forth with a religion of experience. We have talked of that which we did know. For this the great crowd is clamoring; and it is this which gives, in the heart of the missionary, clerical or lay, the greatest impulse for the work of soul-saving.

Let us go forth then with our message of saving grace to all men. We must carry forth a gospel for the poor. Sad will be the day when we put in the place of prominence the man in fine apparel, and relegate the poor man to the background. Surely we shall do as well as the Scotch poet who sang:

"A man's a man for a' that."

We must feel as did the Duke of Wellington, who said to the poor man kneeling restlessly by his side at the communion table, "Be still, here we are all equal." It must be a gospel to the poor, telling them in plainest terms their duty to the church and to society. To do this requires no little courage in these days.

But we must proclaim a gospel for the rich. They have their cares and their burdens. We are too prone to think of them as so fortunate that they need no word of sympathy such as we can bring. No home is darker than the home of wealth when it is without God. The gloomiest picture I have ever witnessed was a home of this kind, in which lay the dead body of an only son who had died of delirium tremens. It must be a gospel to the rich. We must tell them their duty to society and the church. Unrighteous modes of money-making, injustice to the poor employee, greedy self-indulgence must be condemned. We must faithfully give to the rich man the gospel for which he pays.

We must preach the gospel adapted to the ignorant. A college education is a desideratum for the ministry; but it injures rather than helps when it separates the preacher from the plainer folk. Let us not forget how the most of the life of the great Kingsley was spent among the uncultured, and how he taught many of his parishioners how to read, how to think, how to live. It is said of our Lord, in whom dwelt all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, that "the common people heard him gladly."

We must have a gospel for the scholarship of the day. And indeed we have it. It has long seemed to me that Methodism was raised up to meet the special form of unbelief of this nineteenth century. That unbelief is calling itself agnosticism; it boasts that we cannot know God. Methodism asserts as does no other church the witness of the Spirit. It sings,

“What we have felt and seen,
With confidence we tell;
And publish to the sons of men
The signs infallible.”

The only convincing answer to the unbelief of to-day is to be found here. * * *

The world is ready for our message. Let me give you two illustrations of this truth. In my first pastorate, I was preaching, one Sunday night, from the text beginning, “The Spirit and the Bride say come,” etc., when I noticed a man, standing in the vestibule, listening very intently to all I was saying. I soon recognized him as a plain, unlettered Irishman I had often seen about town. At last he came inside the door, and then some distance down the aisle, unconscious all the while of the smiles and stares of the people in the rear of the church. When the congregation was dismissed, he pressed his way to me, and, taking my hand, he said, “That’s the first preaching I’ve heard for thirty-five years. But I’d like to know something about that Jesus you talked about to-night.”

In a great New York church one Sabbath evening,

after the congregation had left the church, the choir remained to rehearse a new piece of music, and the pastor was the only listener. The words they were singing were those of the familiar hymn, beginning,

“I heard the voice of Jesus say,
Come unto Me and rest.”

Two newsboys, poorly clad, entered the church on tiptoe, and gazed, in rapture, with open mouths, at the choir, and drank in words and music. No wonder, when it was over, the preacher put his arm around each boy and kissed him fondly on his cheek.

These illustrations are typical of the world's hunger, and of the Gospel's power to satisfy. When we shall hold up this Gospel in its sweet simplicity, touched as little as possible by the forms of the church and by the theology of the schools, then will be fulfilled the words of our Lord, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.”

V

THE SOCIAL AND REVIVAL MEETINGS OF METHODISM.

BY HENRY E. JOHNSON, D. D.

The social and revival meetings of Methodism mark an era in the history of Christianity—the era of the emancipation of the laity. Prior to the advent of Methodism public worship was as a rule performed solely by the minister and his clerk or other assistant. The great body of the people had long been denied any real participation in the worship of the sanctuary, or in the management of the church and its affairs; and had ceased to feel any responsibility for either the one or the other. Religion was a thing to be attended to by proxy, and about which the individual conscience felt small concern. Methodism, by the thunder peal and lightning flash of its revival preaching, waked the slumbering conscience; and then, through its class-meetings and love-feasts, furnished opportunity for the use of individual gifts. The humblest private Christian was made to feel that he had the right to speak of the work of God in his own soul, or to persuade his fellow-sinners to seek the

Saviour he had found, or to approach God in prayer for his blessing on those around him. In these meetings the early Methodists were trained as workmen, skilled in winning souls for Christ, and conducting them into his kingdom. They were not polished, but they were powerful; they were rude in speech, but not in knowledge concerning the vital matters of repentance, faith and conversion.

The full import of this emancipation of the laity from the bondage of silence has not been appreciated among us, even by the historians of Methodism. One of the important subjects just now engaging the attention of medical science, is the rediscovery of the art of breathing. Impelled by some of the customs of modern life, we have been gasping instead of breathing—at each inspiration filling only a small part of the lung, leaving the remainder vacant and idle. The result has been an enfeebled and devitalized body which falls an easy prey to any invading disease. Deep breathing in a pure atmosphere is the art of health; for it furnishes an enlarged surface on which the vitalizing fluid can act for the enriching of the fountain of life. So the class-meeting, the love-feast and the revival have enlarged the surface in the body of the church, on which the Holy Ghost can act, thus improving its health and increasing its power.

The class-meeting was the unit of Methodism—that around which the whole system revolved. It furnished to the pastor the best analysis of the con-

gregation he has ever been able to obtain. Preaching deals with the crowd; the class-meeting deals with the individual. Just here is found the essential difference between the spirit of Romanism and the spirit of Protestantism. Romanism destroys individualism by swallowing up the individual in the church. Methodism brought to birth an individual religious consciousness, which is the basis of equality and the foundation of manliness. Romanism stretches its flat monotony prairie-like across the human consciousness, while Methodism rears its serrated crest like a longitudinal mountain range, down the continent of experience, while its foot-hills slope away to the bank of the River of Life.

The class-meeting and love-feast were the cultivators of "experience." The Methodist knew that he or she would be expected to speak in class, hence sought in communion with God for further progress of the work within, whereof to testify. No other machinery yet discovered has proven so effective in the care of converts, as the old time Methodist class-meeting. No other interest of the church gives the pastor so much concern, or costs him so much pain, as the care of those just born into the Kingdom; and surely no safer method of providing for this difficult task has yet appeared than that which our fathers used so well.

Nor is this, as some have thought, a human invention, for it rests on a broad scriptural base. The Word often refers to godly people as "witnesses for

God," and while the language may incidentally refer to conduct, yet clearly its primary meaning is oral testimony. Oh, what testimonies we have heard in the class-room! The cumulative power of such testimonies, sweeping the whole gamut of intellectual ability, from that of the drayman off the streets of Washington, to that of Hon. John McLean, justice of the supreme bench of the nation, is the best lecture on the Christian evidences we have ever heard. What prayers we have heard in class and love-feast! I recall a love-feast at old Bellamy's Church in Gloucester when penitents came forward to seek the Saviour. The presiding elder called on Brother Betty, of Richmond, to pray. The grand old class-leader prayed until his soul was in a flame of holy rapture. I was afraid to open my eyes for fear I would see God, for that man prayed as Moses prayed when he saw God face to face. He prayed until it was like the second Pentecost. "The place was shaken where they were assembled together;" and the stove-pipe fell with a great crash, but Brother Betty did not stop until the shouts of happy converts told that the answer had come.

The social and revival meetings of early Methodism possessed no greater influence over the popular mind than the hearty singing of the spiritual songs of that day. Nor has Methodism suffered anywhere a greater loss than in the substitution of the over-cooked and dessicated productions of so-called musical science, rendered, alas! too often, by unwashed lips, for the

spontaneous, simple, heart-stirring worship of an entire congregation. We recall a scene at the Wesley Grove Camp-ground. It was a Sunday morning love-feast; many had spoken of the goodness of God, and our hearts were tender. A venerable man arose and tremblingly leaned on his cane as he told of a long pilgrimage and the sustaining power of grace in the midst of sore trials and bereavements. Then with that far-away look which marks the eye of faith he said: "I am nearing the river; I can see the other shore; the walls of the city are flashing with light; the gate is open; faces of loved ones are beaming on me; they beckon me to cross; I want you, who are around me here to-day, to be with me there; be sure to come." He sank exhausted to his seat. Instantly, that prince of song, Jeff. Magruder, started the chorus—

We'll be there, we'll be there.

A thousand voices leaped to the refrain; and in a moment the camp was in a holy commotion; while shouts of praise drowned the voices of the singers.

* * *

There remains for this review, one unique department of Methodist revival work; that is, the camp-meeting. Not one of our modern religious picnics at a pleasure resort. Not a promenade ground where the belles and beaux might disport their finery in the clouds of dust; not a place for social reunions and neighborhood gossip. No, no! The old-time

camp-meeting was a challenge to the powers of darkness; it was a charge of the Light Brigade on the entrenchments of the black-bannered hosts of hell.

My first camp-meeting was during the first year of my ministry. It was held at Salem, on Gloucester circuit. Three thousand people assembled under the great brush arbor covering nearly an acre of ground. It was there, on Tuesday morning, that David S. Doggett, then presiding elder of the District, preached the greatest sermon of his life. His theme was, "The Freedom of the Will;" his text: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." At one point in the discourse the mighty rush of emotion overcame the normal self-poise of the great preacher. He stood for two minutes quivering, silent, speechless. Then with a mighty burst of eloquence he swayed the great assembly as a forest is swayed by a tornado. Fifty-four persons rushed forward and fell on their knees with cries and groans for mercy, and nearly one hundred were converted that day.

NOTE.—Brief addresses by the Rev. W. B. Beauchamp and others were put in type for this volume, but were crowded out by an unexpected addition to the historical material, which, under the rule, had the right of way.

